HISTORICAL METHOD

HISTORICAL METHOD
IN
RELATION TO INDIAN HISTORY

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PREFACE

This book is a revised and amplifed version of my *Historical Method in Relation to Problems of South Indian History* published in 1941 by the University of Madras. The revision has been undertaken with a view to include a brief consideration of the whole ground of Indian History and to meet the requirements of the syllabus in the subject prescribed for the M.A. in Indology of the University of Mysore. The revision has been very largely the work of Sri H. S. Ramanna carried out in consultation with me; the brief chapter on Philosophy of History has been specially written by me for this edition. Though intended primarily for the students of Mysore, I venture to hope that the book may be of some use to others as well.

My thanks are due to Sri S. Viswanathan, Proprietor, Central Art Press, for the readiness with which he undertook the publication and for the excellent production of the book in a short time.

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K. A. N.

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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Before we consider the different types of historical evidence bearing on the specific problems of Indian History, some space must be devoted to the study of a few general considerations. Modern historical method in the sense in which we are concerned with it is altogether a creation of the last century and a half. In making this statement we do not mean to deny the existence of historians at an earlier time. It would be untrue to do it. In fact, western historical writing may be traced back to the Greek genius. As Thomson says 'The Greeks wrote history of all characters and of all dimensions. The history of men or things, of great nations and small cities, universal annals and local chronicles, political, literary and military memoirs. There is nothing which they forgot or ignored. Yet to the end of Greek literature the prevailing purpose of Greek historians remained constant—to give information. The Greeks first learned the art of writing real history, and perceived its purposes, its duties, its laws. The Greeks were the originators of history as they were of science and philosophy. European historiography need go no further back.'*

But the Greeks showed little interest in their past history, though they were deeply engaged in contemporary affairs. They had very little interest in their origins. History was conceived as the narration of memorable events. As the authors of the *Introduction to the Study of History* say : 'To preserve the memory and propagate the knowledge of glorious deeds, or of events which were of importance to a man, a family, or a people; such was the aim of history in the time of Thucydides and Livy.' (p. 297). Herodotus, who is regarded as the Father of History, chose the Persian wars as his theme ; Thucydides selected the Peloponnesian war ; Polybius, the Punic wars. They were Pragmatic historians. They have given expression to the dictum that history is philosophy teaching by example.

This belief in the Pragmatic value of history was not peculiar to classical historians. Instruction, whether moral or political, was considered throughout the Middle Ages, and also in the Renaissance as the main function of history. Even in Modern times, historians

* *History of Historical Writing*—p. 24.

have emphasised the instructional value of history. Lord Acton declared that History was a great moral teacher. But by far the most illustrious historian to support this time-honoured function of history is Mr. G. M. Trevelyan : 'The truth about the past, if taught and read with broad human sympathy can give a noble education to the mind of the student not only in politics but in all kinds of civic and social relationships, and even in the domain of personal, religious, and ethical ideals.' And when dealing with the meaning of history he says, 'It is the tale of the thing done, even more than its causes and effects, which trains political judgement by widening the range of political sympathy, and deepening the approval of conscience, that stimulates by example youth to aspire and age to endure, by the light of what men once have been, to see the things we are and dimly to describe the form of what we should be.'* This Pragmatic character of History necessitated the historians conceiving history as a branch of literature. Historical truth was subordinated to style. Form was more important than matter.

The nineteenth century has indeed been *par excellence* the century of great historical writing. Many large works of permanent value have been written by scholars of different nations and they cover various aspects of human history. Read a comprehensive book like Gooch : *History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century* and you will see clearly that that century may well be called the Golden Age of historical thinking. Niebuhr and Von Ranke laboured hard to free themselves of the implication that History was an art, an edifying branch of literature, and as such could not give results of scientific value. They insisted on attaching importance to documentary evidence. They attempted to get historical knowledge by applying scientific criticism to the evidence that is supplied by available documents which have satisfactorily been found valid. Moreover, towards the middle of the nineteenth century, Geology, Archaeology, and other auxiliary sciences came to the aid and altered the conception of human history. 'With the extension of the general scope of historical studies' says Prof. Cohen, 'there naturally came a widening of the conception of the proper subject matter of history. Instead of the old restriction to the study of kings and dynasties, warriors and the like, there came also a more human conception of the proper province of history,

* G. M. Trevelyan : *Present Position of History*—p. 148.

to include ordinary social functions, such as games, social manners, everyday business transactions, all the things which constitute the substance of the daily life of men, women and children.'*

Towards the latter half of 19th century, Edward Freeman gave a definition of history that is far too narrow. He said that 'History is past politics and politics are present history.' Following him, Seeley, another English historian of the same time declared that the interest of history lay in its application to contemporary politics. He proposed a school of statesmanship, 'by giving due precedence in the teaching of history to the present over the past'; politics, he declared, were vulgar, when they were not liberalised by history, and history faded into mere literature when it lost sight of its relation to practical politics. 'It was a lofty ambition, but didactic history, however scientific in intention and stimulating, has its pit-falls. Moreover, his emphasis on the superior utility of the study of recent times ignores the truth that to-day is not only the child of yesterday but the heir of all the ages.' (Gooch).

The above definitions are one-sided and narrow. History is no longer a chronicle of kings and wars. It is at least as much interested in the life and doings of common men, and the scope of modern historical writing has broadened so as to include all aspects of social life. Seeley himself, in his *Life of Stein*, had to take into account sociological questions; and of late a vast number of sciences and arts have come under the historical purview. Religion, philosophy, economic factors cannot be neglected. As Prof. Kellet rightly says 'Thus we have what may be called, almost without exaggeration, in mathematical language, an infinite divergent series of histories, ever increasing in magnitude and with an incalculable remainder. It is impossible to limit such a series to one particular class.

'With all this and much more to consider, it has become increasingly plain that history is no longer an affair for a single man, even if, like Macaulay, he deals, in a thousand pages, with but a dozen years, or if like Orme, he gives two pages to the events of every twenty-four hours over a very short period of British Indian History. It is for specialists, and the lessons each specialist implicitly teaches will vary with the man and his theme. With politics, he will show himself political, with economics he will be a guide to economists, with religion he will instruct the religious,

* Cohen : *The Meaning of Human History*—page 15.

with education he will be educational.'* To Lord Acton (1834-1902), the least voluminous, but the most brilliant of all the writers of the nineteenth century, History was, as already noted, the record of man's moral progress. Being a staunch Catholic and one who had indulged in the papal controversies of the 19th century, he believed in the immanence of moral law. In his opening paragraphs of the inaugural address, he declares : 'Politics and History are interwoven but are not commensurate. Ours is a domain that reaches farther than affairs of state. It is our function to keep in view and to command the movement of ideas, which are not the effect but the cause of public events.' The first of human concern was religion, the second liberty, and their fortunes were intertwined. Passing from the scope of history to the spirit which should govern its study he emphasised the sanctity of the moral code. 'I exhort you never to debase the moral currency, but to try others by the final maxim that governs your own lives, and to suffer no man and no cause to escape the undying penalty which history has the power to inflict on wrong.' 'In judging men and things', he had written to Creighton, 'ethics go before dogma, politics and nationality.' The historian, in his view, was not only the interpreter of events and ideologies but the guardian of morality. 'The inflexible integrity of the moral code,' he declared, 'is to me the secret of the authority, the dignity and the utility of history.' Facts were for him, he said, 'not a burden on the memory, but an illumination of the soul.' With regard to his knowledge, Herbert Paul has said : 'To be in his company was like being in the best of historical libraries with the best of historical catalogues.'

Croce declares in *History, Its Theory and Practice* that all history is contemporary history in the sense that we can only think of the past with the mind of our own day. The notion of sequence, indispensable for the practical purposes of life, fails to provide us with objective reality. To Croce the average historian is a mere chronicler, for facts only become history when they have passed through the crucible of an individual mind. No historian can forecast the future ; since history never repeats itself, Croce rejects determinism as decisively as Toynbee, and salutes the conception of liberty as fervently as Acton himself.

Another, and perhaps stricter, view of the role of History is possible and has often been held. It is that History is just know-

* *Aspects of History*—116.

ledge of the past 'as it is really happened,' irrespective of its influence on the present or future. This was Ranke's view. On this view it is the function of history not so much to illuminate the present or furnish lessons for its guidance, as to satisfy our natural curiosity about the thoughts and deeds of our ancestors. Only our interest in the past is the limiting factor in the choice and portrayal of data ; present needs should have no part in governing their selection or interpretation.

Whatever view we adopt, the fact will remain that each generation has its own outlook on history and this will be governed willy-nilly by the pressure of current situations. Accordingly its selection and interpretation of occurrences of the past will also differ, and this is the reason why History is being re-written from one generation to another and each version differs in its colour and texture from those which preceded and from others likely to follow it. This raises a question of importance in the archival policy of modern states. While so far as the past is concerned we have to work with what evidence has survived, we have to exercise very great care with regard to the destruction of current records. But the records of modern governments are so voluminous that preservation of all of them is practically impossible ; at the same time, as no one can foresee the shifts in the relative importance and value of documents for future students, any one who destroys any but the most trivial records of public affairs and even of private occurrences incurs the risk of obliterating evidence of historical value.

Prof. Renier, in his illuminating little book, *History, Its Purpose and Method* (1950) emphasises the social role of history. It is admitted that authentic history is the story of civilised human societies as told by earnest students of the subject. For every human being the memory of his individual experiences is a matter of primary importance. Without it he can take no important decision, nor advance in the path of progress. He cannot even survive without keeping such memory constantly fresh. It is through history that man uses his accumulated experience. History ill-told and mis-applied can be dangerous as we realize to our cost in India. True history has thus to perform a great social service.

Thus, History is a product of modern thought and study even in the West, and regular narratives of public events like those of

Herodotus and Thucydides, Livy and Polybius were the exceptions rather than the rule in ancient and medieval times. In spite of their admitted merits these works are mixed up with much that is legendary and fabulous, and the so-called historians often invented speeches which they put into the mouth of historical characters and otherwise drew largely upon their imagination. For long ages history when it was not a dry chronicle maintained in monasteries, courts and elsewhere, was looked upon as a branch of literature, and modern historians have had to exercise great care in their use of professed histories of Antiquity and the Middle Ages. The most notable exception to this common practice before the 19th century is in fact to be found in India in the regular succession of Arabic and Persian historians of the Islamic World, of whom quite a considerable number lived and did their work in India. And their example did not fail to appeal to some Hindu writers, most notably Kalhana of Kashmir who lays down several very correct principles of historiography and practises them to the extent to which the materials at his disposal allowed him. The normal Hindu attitude to history, however, was different. It was not one of indifference born of a disgust with life in time, but a desire to view human affairs against the universal background of nature and of divinity. There is a Greek tradition that an Indian sage who visited Socrates asked the Greek Philosopher what he was engaged on ; the reply was that he was interesting himself in the study of men and their ways ; the Indian thereupon asked him what he knew of the ways of the gods, and when Socrates confessed his ignorance on that subject, the Indian just smiled and said that men could not be understood without a correct knowledge of gods and supermen. Now that story may or may not be true ; but it gives a correct account of the Indian attitude to human events, and goes far to explain the scope and content of the numerous *Puranas*, *Upa-puranas* and *Sthala-puranas*—all conceived as narrative of universal evolution meant for the education and edification of the populace. We of the twentieth century A.D. have a natural and insuperable difficulty in sharing or approving their view of the matter, but our ancestors were far from being indifferent to the progress of the world they inhabited. Only their accounts of the world began with the creation, traversed the whole domain of the myth and fable they cherished about gods and their *avataras* and the numerous classes of super-humans, and gave only a very

subordinate place to what we should call history. This tendency to link up the human with the super-human is a constant trait of the ancient Indian mode of thought. It accounts for the anxiety of our royal dynasties to trace their descent from the sun and the moon, for the form of our two great national epics the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* which doubtless envelope a core of history in many sheaths of imaginative embellishment, and for the fact that even professedly historical works like Bana's *Harshacarita*, Bilhana's *Vikramankadeva Charita*, and the *Kalingattupparani* of Jayangondar and the *Muvar-ula* of Ottakkuttan and the *Periyapuranam* of Sekkilar, to mention only a few well-known instances, often move on the border-land between fact and fable. On the other hand professedly mythological works like Pampa's *Bharata* and Ranna's *Gadayuddha*—both in Kannada—often contain the most valuable references to contemporary historical events which admirably supplement our gleanings on these matters from the inscriptions. Despite their imperfection as history, these works, particularly the epics and the hagiologies, have been potent factors in shaping the life of the people. Even so recent a writer as Jayaram Pinde, the court-poet of Shahji, in his *Radha-Madhava Vilasa-Champu* (1660) invents a conversation between the Lord of the Universe and Brahma, the Creator, to proclaim the greatness of his hero. He writes :

Jagadisa Virinciku puchata haim
kaho srsti raci, rakha kona kaham
sasi vo ravi purava pascima lom
tuma soya raho sirasindhu maham
aru uttara dacchina racchanako
ita Sahaji haim, uta Sajaham.

The sting of the conceit is in its tail ; the poet roundly affirms the parity of Shaji with Shahjahan. But no one was misled by the conventions of our ' literary histories ' if we may so call them, and there is no lack of downright statements of facts in the voluminous epigraphy and literatures of our country of which the close study for historical purposes is still only in its initial stages.

True it is that the strongly traditional character of our culture, of its literature and its arts had led to greater emphasis, on the achievement of tasks than on the persons or the epochs connected with it, and very often we are treated to details which we should gladly exchange for some others on which no light is forthcoming.

Valmiki and Vyasa are but shadowy names, and even Kalidasa is very largely so ; while we can see and admire the glory of the Kailas at Ellora or the superb excellence of the paintings at Ajanta and Bagh, we do not know anything of the names and lives of the painters, architects and sculptors who created these wonders. But this is true in some measure of all times and ages, and for a parallel we may go to the great cathedrals of Medieval Europe. Only a little study and reflection are required to show that people in India did not in any way differ fundamentally in their attitude to life and its opportunities from other nations of the world. Speaking generally, and subject to the one reservation that has just been made, they were not perceptibly behind their contemporaries in other lands in the creation and enjoyment of the amenities of a complex civilisation, or even in their desire to be remembered by posterity for what they were and what they did. The hundreds of votive inscriptions recording the names, purposes and objects of the gifts, the many longer inscriptions recording the genealogies and achievement of long lines of rulers before coming to the actual business on hand, among which those of the Deccan and South India take a very prominent place, the musical inscription of a royal disciple of Rudracharya at Kudumiyamalai, the numerous signed sculptures on the walls of Hoysala temples in Mysore, the several temple chronicles some of which have survived after many have been destroyed, the *prasastis* at the beginning and the colophons at the end of most literary works giving authentic details of the lives of the authors and their patrons, are enough to repudiate the suggestion that to the Indian his life was a 'nightmare,' an experience not worth remembering or recording.

The question is often asked whether history is a Science. The authors of the *Introduction to the Study of History* are inclined to dismiss the question as puerile. But there is no doubt that as Bury once put it, 'history is the oldest art, and the youngest aspirant to the claim of being a science.' But Bury also said 'History is a Science, no more nor less.' It has been suggested that history aspires to be a science because in the growth of modern knowledge since the renaissance, Science got the start, and scientific methods reached a greater perfection earlier than historical method. In the 17th and 18th centuries the scientific method may be said to have made great progress, and the physical sciences in particular developed an organon of criticism and method of their own which

seemed to be very reliable and to give most fruitful results of a definite character. History wanted to be like the physical sciences. But since then there has been a redress of the balance, and history has come into its own. Our concern is more to point out that while it is not very useful to seek to establish or repudiate the claim of history to be a science, it is much more necessary to see in what relation the method of science stands to historical method. Now, the essence of scientific method is to base conclusions upon known visible facts. To the extent to which science does not do this, every scientist should be inclined to say that it is not science. Science bases conclusions upon tangible facts ; facts which can be seen, tested and repeated, which can be experimented on, and which can be personally tested by every scientist everywhere. In other words the data of science are present and universal. Everybody can have access to them in the exact form in which it is reported by somebody. Once you think of that, you will at once realise that the method of history is quite different. If personal knowledge of the facts on which your conclusions must be based is a condition of history, history will be impossible. No historian can live in the days of Mohenjodaro except metaphorically. Personal acquaintance with facts cannot be the basis of any historical construction. It is at once apparent that observation of the overwhelming majority of the essential facts of the life of man is beyond the capacity of any historian. There is little he can see as an eye witness. No historian, even though he be dealing with contemporary life, can observe more than a few of his facts directly, as does a chemist or a botanist. He must rely upon facts as reported by other men. The facts of history are like the wine given by the priestess in Rabelais's story. It tasted differently in the mouth of every one to whom she gave it. In other words, the data of history are past, dead, and gone, and they are also unique. No two historical situations are alike. It is often said that history repeats itself. It would be perhaps much truer to say that history never repeats itself. Burke was right in insisting that every situation has its peculiar colour and circumstance, and what is done in one situation cannot be repeated in another. So the data of history are not like the data of science. Scientific data are present and universal ; historical data are past and unique. There is more. Let us take two questions like these : Why does this red litmus paper turn blue ? is a scientific question. Frame a historical

question : Why did Brutus murder Caesar ? The questions are those of Prof. Collingwood, whose exposition is followed here. We see at once that in answering the second question we are faced with a number of complexities which do not trouble us in answering the first. The trouble arises from the fact that history deals with human actions, motives and movements which are not always understood. Even the motives of present actions are not fully understood. When you seek to reconstruct past actions with the aid of stray records, the difficulty is increased a hundred-fold. The presence of human motivation at every stage adds another dimension to the data of history, unknown to science and thereby increases the complexity of the task of the historian. History is intrinsically far more complex than the more objective realms dealt with by science. In other words, the 'facts' of history are highly subjective. It is a fact that Lincoln was a great man. But is the conception of Lincoln's greatness the same in the mind of every person who believes him to have been great ? Was it ever the same ? Will it ever be the same ? Many historical facts, far from being simple, have meaning only in relation to other facts, to other deeds, to other thoughts, and even to other emotions. Many a historical fact is simple in its statement, not in its relations, not in its significance. Thus the facts of history, as we have said, are highly subjective. 'History in other words is true in the way in which a picture is true ; not in the way in which a physical law is true.' History gives you a certain knowledge of reality, but it is not a knowledge of universal application, like scientific knowledge. Historical knowledge again is unique in its character and quality.

Are there no similarities then between the method of the historian and that of the scientist ? Yes, both the historian and the scientist have to aim at putting aside all bias from their mind. Faraday's great merit was, it is said, that whenever he started performing experiments, he had the very difficult knack of expecting nothing and observing everything. The historian likewise, has to have a mind which is free from pre-occupation, which is free from theories and is ready to take in all the bits of evidence, and appraise each such bit at its proper worth. The historian should strive to be as scientific as possible in his search for and sifting of material. He should be disinterested, systematic, patient, exact and as complete as possible. The search for materials and the testing of them should be done in the same spirit as that in

which the chemist and the botanist work. Thoroughness and accuracy should be the aim of every scholar, no matter in what field he works. In this respect, and in no other, is the historian a scientist.

History, then, is in part a science. It is also, and in a much greater degree, an art. It consists not only in collecting facts about the past, but in thinking and feeling about them. Adequate interpretation and portrayal are impossible without imagination, a sense of values and a gift of expression. We must have a proper conception of the facts, of the conditions, of the motives, and of the characters. We must acquire a proper understanding of them. The past cannot be constructed by men whose knowledge of life has been gained only from documents. Mere accumulation of facts is insufficient. Using our imagination and our judgement, we have to interpret them. No, facts do not always speak for themselves. They have to be weighed and measured. They must be placed in their proper setting. There must be intelligent reflection upon the significance of the facts. They must be seen in their relations of time and place. There must be that insight into reality without which the past can have no vital meaning for living men. More than this, in fact there is no sharp distinction between facts and their meanings ; and social facts are not merely spatial-temporal. History is much more an art than a science in the matter of portrayal. After a mental image of a period or an event has been formed, the story must be told. Brick-makers are necessary ; but even more necessary for an edifice of history is an architect. The collection of material is the beginning and not the end of the historian's task. He must have the deep feeling, to which the unaided and unimaginative reason rarely attains, that our ancestors were once as really alive as we are now. And he must have the literary power to make that apparent to others. When truth has been found, it must be transmitted. And that is an art. It is only perfection of style that enables a human voice to speak unaltered across the centuries to a remote posterity. In this respect, History can be considered an art, and a difficult art. And as Cohen rightly points out, 'this does not mean that the historian creates the events he reports. Having chosen a given perspective that which he can truthfully report is objectively determined. The relativism of historiography is not identical with subjectivism.'

Now this leads us to say that to understand the past from such data as we have of it is not so easy as it seems. The proper task of the historian is to interpret the past for the present. It has already been stated that the present has an influence in the historian's work. But if the historian seeks to interpret the past with the present instead of for the present, and if he seeks to carry the present into the past and to discover the latest devices, social, political, etc., in the earlier stages of human history, we can only say that he is engaging in a huge circular argument from which no one can derive any profit. On the other hand, to emphasise the respects in which the past differed from the present and to account for the differences and explain them in a manner intelligible to us of the present, that is far more instructive and worthy of the historian than to hunt for misleading similarities based upon distorted evidence.

Errors of History: There are many kinds of possible error. The most common error in the interpretation of the past is what might be called the didactical error, the error of discovering in history the lessons which we wish to inculcate. How often has not Luther been hailed as the founder of liberty and the secularisation of European life since the Reformation. That is the only basis for this common error. In reality Luther had much more in common with his opponents than with us. Many instances of his life show that he was not less religious or less fervid in his hold on religion or less intolerant than those whom he opposed. If again we think of what had gone before Luther in the Age of the Renaissance, of Erasmus, of Machiavelli and other Renaissance spirits, it may well become a question whether Luther on the whole did not go back on the Renaissance rather than give the world a forward push towards secularisation and freedom.

Now this kind of error, of trying to throw things in a perspective from a particular stand-point, becomes much greater in short abridgements of history than in large treatises written on an ampler scale with due attention to proportion and detail. In minute work, you see the complexity of the whole process, and you are not given to simplifying it. But in short accounts of world history, like Wells' *History of the World*, you cannot be too careful to keep away from such easy misleading simplifications. To say that Luther was responsible for the freedom and secularisation of the modern world would be no more true than to say that

Columbus was responsible for the sky-scrapers of New York or for the Federal Reserve Bank System.

Another illustration may be found in a book of Laski. *His Rise of European Liberalism* seeks to interpret the history of Liberalism in the light of recent occurrences. But it would be a nice point for argument how much of this reinterpretation is due to that natural process in which every generation has got to reinterpret the past from its own stand-point and how much the selection of evidence has been guided by the bias of Laski in favour of communism. In another work, more recent, *Parliamentary Government in England,* the same writer seeks to demonstrate that Parliamentary democracy was developed by the Capitalist class ' as an instrument for the protection of private property and for maintaining the power of the middle and possessing classes over society.' He appears to forget that in an historical argument, what matters is the contemporary man's view of the course of events, not ours, and any one who reads Grenville or Guizot will perceive that Laski's view never occurred to any one in 19th century England or France.

The second type of error—and this is more common out here with us than in many other countries, is what may be described as the patriotic error, the error of discovering all great and good things in the past of one's own country. And one of the most typical forms this error has taken in our land is the attempt to discover the latest political devices in the most ancient literature and institutions of our land. Innocent words have been made to yield meanings which they could never bear. We have been told that there were bicameral legislatures, there was Cabinet Government, there was separation between public exchequer and the private civil list of the king and so on. But the evidence on which these opinions are based will not bear a moment's scrutiny. These opinions reflect, in fact, not the evidence of the past, so much as the present aspirations of authors at a time when Parliamentary Democracy was more or less universally accepted as the proper political ideal.*

The third type of error has already been touched on; it is best described as partisan error, *viz.* to take sides in historical disputes and to tell the tale almost exclusively from one particular

* The recent announcement of the discovery of an ancient manuscript on the construction of aeroplanes may be recalled for comparison.

point of view. This is an old error; and Polybius uttered a clear warning against it which is worth reproducing here. Commenting on the work of two of his predecessors on the first Punic War, he observes: 'Owing to his convictions and constant partiality Philinus will have it that the Carthaginians in every case acted wisely, well, and bravely, and the Romans otherwise, whilst Fabius takes the precisely opposite view. In other relations of life we should not perhaps exclude all such favouritism, for a good man should love his friends and his country, he should share the hatreds and attachments of his friends; but he who assumes the character of a historian must ignore everything of the sort, and often, if their actions demand this, speak good of his enemies and honour them with the highest praises while criticizing and even reproaching roundly his closest friends, should the errors of their conduct impose this duty on him. For just as a living creature which has lost its eye-sight is wholly incapacitated, so if History is stripped of her truth all that is left is but an idle tale. We should therefore not shrink from accusing our friends or praising our enemies; nor need we be shy of sometimes praising and sometimes blaming the same people, since it is neither possible that men in the actual business of life should always be mistaken. We must therefore, disregard the actors in our narrative and apply to the actions such terms and such criticism as they deserve.' If you take the history of Greece this can best be illustrated by reference to the three authors. Mitford was a strong Conservative with a profound admiration for Spartan institutions and a deep-rooted hatred for Athens and Democracy. His history is written accordingly. Grote wrote a counterblast to Mitford, and one of the closest students of Greek history has described Grote's great work as 'a long democratic pamphlet.' A third writer who is not so well known as he deserves to be, especially when his writing is compared with those two other writers just mentioned, plays the real rôle of a true historian. Thirlwall exhibits no bias one way or another. His scholarship had a wide range, and his judgement was equal to his scholarship. His work has stood the test of time as very few others written in his day have done.

In our own country the scope for partisan error is great. And the mischief that might result from it is greater. I think it will be enough simply to raise a warning that we should as far as possible seek to avoid reading present disputes into past history.

Obvious instances of this tendency are found in many current popular estimates of the rôle of the Brahmin in the past, or of the 'Aryan' in the Tamil land.

British historians of India were labouring till recently under another difficulty of a similar character, the exact nature and consequences of which cannot be better portrayed than in the following words of Messrs. Thompson and Garrat (1935): "Of general histories of British India, those written a century or more ago are, with hardly an exception, franker, fuller and more interesting than those of the last fifty years. In days when no one dreamed that anyone would ever be seditious enough to ask really fundamental questions, and when no one ever thought of any public but a British one, criticism was lively and well-informed, and judgement was passed without regard to political exigencies. Of late years, increasingly and no doubt naturally all Indian questions have tended to be approached from the stand-point of administration; will this make for easier and quieter government? The writer of to-day inevitably has a world outside his own people, listening intently and as touchy as his own people, as swift to take offence. 'He that is not for us is against us.' This knowledge of an over-hearing, even eavesdropping public, of being *in paritibus infidelium*, exercises a constant silent censorship, which has made British-Indian History the worst patch in current scholarship."

Lastly, you have error of yet another kind, resting on a constitutional incapacity to keep out of error. This has been boldly described by Langlois and Seignobos as 'Froude's disease.' 'There are young students with no prior repugnance for the labours of external criticism, who perhaps are even disposed to like them, who yet are, experience has shown it, totally incapable of performing them. There would be nothing perplexing in this if these persons were intellectually feeble; this incapacity would then be but one manifestation of their general weakness; nor yet if they had gone through no technical apprenticeship. But we are concerned with men of education and intelligence, sometimes of exceptional ability, who do not labour under the above disadvantages. These are the people of whom we hear: 'He works badly, he has the genius of inaccuracy.' Their catalogues, their editions, their *regesta*, their monographs swarm with imperfections, and never inspire confidence, try as they may, they never attain, I do not say absolute accuracy, but any decent degree of accuracy.

They are subject to 'chronic inaccuracy,' a disease of which the English historian Froude is a typical and celebrated case. Froude was a gifted writer, but destined never to advance any statement that was not disfigured by error; it has been said of him that he was constitutionally inaccurate. For example, he had visited the city of Adelaide in Australia; 'we saw,' says he, 'below us, in a basin with a river winding through it, a city of 150,000 inhabitants none of whom has ever known or will ever know one moment's anxiety as to the recurring regularity of his three meals a day.' Thus Froude, now for the facts; Adelaide is built on an eminence, no river runs through it; when Froude visited it the population did not exceed 75,000 and it was suffering from a famine at the time. And more of the same kind.

Fortunately we do not often come across many affected by this malady to the extent this extract would indicate. But the percentage of liability to Froude's disease in different individuals may be a matter deserving careful study and attention. These general observations may with advantage be closed with an account of the practice and theory followed by one of the most eminent historians of France, M. Fustel de Coulanges, given mostly in his own works. He says that he always followed three rules in his work; to study directly and solely the texts in the most minute detail, to believe only what they prove and finally to keep out resolutely from the history of the past modern ideas which a false method carries into it. He explains the implications of the three rules quite clearly in the following manner. Even one who reads documents will serve no useful purpose if he does so with preconceived notions; and this is the most common mistake of our time. While French scholars carry their party spirit into ancient history, Germans carry back their love of their country and race, which is perhaps morally better, but alters truth quite as much. Patriotism is a virtue, history is a science; it will not do to confound them. Some scholars begin by getting used to an opinion, either borrowed hastily at second hand from books, or based on their imagination or reasoning and only after this do they read the texts. They run great risk of not understanding them or of misunderstanding them. There ensues an unavowed conflict between the text and the preconceived spirit in which it is read; the spirit declines to seize what is contrary to its idea; and the ordinary result of this conflict is not that the spirit surrenders to the evidence of the text, but

rather the text yields, is twisted, and comes to terms with the opinion preconceived by the spirit.

Many think however that it is good and useful for the historian to have preferences, leading ideas, and superior conceptions. This, they say, gives his work more life and more charm ; it is the salt which favours the insipidity of facts. To think thus is to mistake very much the nature of history. It is not an imaginative art ; it is also much of a science. It does not consist in narrating with approbation or discoursing with profundity. It consists like science in facing facts, in analysing them, in putting them together and marking their connections. It may be, that a certain philosophy emerges from this scientific history ; but it should emerge naturally, of itself, almost outside the mind of the historian. By himself he has no other ambition than to see the facts and understand them exactly. It is not in his imagination or in his logic that he seeks them ; he seeks and gets them by the minute examination of texts, as the chemist finds his facts in experiments minutely conducted. His unique skill consists in drawing from the documents all that they contain and in not adding to this what they do not contain. The best historian is he who holds himself closest to the texts, who interprets them with the utmost justice, who writes and even thinks only in accordance with them.

CHAPTER 2

THE NATURE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HISTORICAL METHOD

1. Heuristics
2. Criticism
3. Synthesis
4. Exposition.

In this chapter, we propose to examine the nature and significance of an important branch of historical research, its method. It is the process employed in the search for and presentation of historical truth. It examines its conditions and the processes to indicate the character and the limits of historical knowledge. It embodies within itself a body of rules which each researcher should follow when he undertakes work on any problem of history. In other words, historical method deals with the complicated operations of criticism and construction, of analysis and synthesis. The critical investigation and appraisal of the various kinds of evidence for purposes of historical investigation is the main object of the operations involved.

The importance of the study of this method was first recognised in 19th century by German historians. Ranke and his pupils were the pioneers to apply these principles to historical research. But they never wrote any treatise on method. Bernheim, the doyen of writers on historical method, was the first German scholar to write a comprehensive treatise on the subject. It is the first detailed and scientific presentation of the processes of historical investigation and has been the guide of two generations of scholars and historians. But the book is in German and no translation in English is available. Further, Prof. Bernheim deals largely with the metaphysical problems which we consider devoid of interest. Secondly, though the teaching of the *Lehrbuch* is sound enough, it lacks vigour and freshness. And it is not intended for the general reader ; both the language in which it is written and the form in which it is composed render it inaccessible to the great majority of Indian readers. Next to this German work, we have the celebrated book by name 'Introduction to the study of History' by Langlois and Seignobos written in French and translated into English by G. C. Berry. It

is the only complete and authoritative treatise on historical method available in English so far. Recently, the Dutch scholar Renier has written a book by name *History, its Method and Purpose* and has fairly dealt with the various problems of methodology giving high priority to Philosophy of History.

Historical method comprises four parts: Heuristics, Criticism, Synthesis and Exposition. These four parts exactly correspond to the main duties of the historian. Heuristics deals with the art of search for and the collection of various kinds of documents. The historian or the researcher should know the exact places or localities where these documents are lying. The second function of the historian is the critical interpretation or examination of the same documents, known as 'criticism.' The third duty is to group the historical facts and to ascertain their causal genesis. This is technically known as 'synthesis.' The last and the crowning part of methodology is the narration or the presentation of the historical facts. This process is known as 'exposition.'

Heuristics, the first part, is the art of searching for and the collection of various documents which form the main sources of history. It is concerned mainly with the collection and the conservation of the various source materials or the documents of history. Documents are the traces of the thoughts and actions of men of former times. These documents are accessible to the investigators in various forms. They may be either material objects like monuments, sculptures, paintings, pottery, coins and so on or the records proper. A proper understanding of these various material traces or 'Archaeological evidences' is absolutely necessary for ancient Indian history. In this field, the Central Archaeological Department of India and the State Departments have done yeoman service in the conservation and collection of these various monuments, sculptures, inscriptions and coins. The researcher who intends to work on any aspect of ancient Indian history, should go through the various reports of Archaeological Survey of India and the reports of State Archaeological Departments. Further the various Catalogues and Bibliographies, available on the subject should be carefully surveyed. On the side of records, The National Archives of India and similar organisations in the States, particularly Madras and Bombay, are doing their best to catalogue and preserve the various records of the modern period. The historian of modern India should look into the various Cata-

logues, Calendars and Bibliographies prepared by the archivists; and further, as far as possible, unpublished manuscripts should also be consulted. Thus Heuristics which is derived from the German word 'Heuristik' mainly concerns itself with the searching of the various documents available in various public and private archives and libraries for the purpose of historical research. This forms the first and the foremost part of the historian's craft without which he cannot proceed with further work and investigation.

Criticism

The collection of documents in various libraries, museums, archives and other places is not the chief end and aim of the historian's task. He must find out whether these documents are good or bad and whether they are credible as evidence. This part of historian's work constitutes *Criticism*.

Thus the main object of criticism is to test the data furnished by his predecessors and to determine whether the fragments of information received are themselves true or what measure of probability should be ascribed to them. These are the main duties of historical criticism. But criticism is not the end and aim of historical research. It can prove no fact. It only yields probabilities. Its work is purely negative. It merely decomposes documents into statements, each labelled with an estimate of its value—worthless statement or statement of unknown value or of true fact. The proper coordination and grouping of facts, the perception of the relations of events and the final narration of these facts are some of the objects of Historical Methodology. But yet these are of no value or significance unless based on proper scientific criticism.

The processes of criticism fall into two parts. They are *external criticism* and *internal criticism*. These two modes of historical criticism constitute the central part of research in the writing of history. External criticism determines the degree of authenticity of documents. It examines whether a particular document or a relic is genuine or not. This process is mainly concerned with the externals of documents. Many of our ancient documents of which the originals were lost, were copied from generation to generation and in the course of these transcriptions, mistakes of many sorts were made. External criticism thus deals with the critical investigation of authorship of these documents, the hand-writing, and the source of the documents. It detects forged documents and finds

out anachronisms, interpolations and additions. For example, our ancient books like *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana* and the Puranas passed on from generation to generation with so many interpolations and additions. These can generally be detected by means of external criticism of documents. But the testing of certain portions of historical material requires the aid of several highly specialised branches of learning. They are technically known as *The Auxiliary Sciences of History*. They are paleography, diplomatics, politics, economics, archaeology including geology and chronology. A proper understanding of these various allied subjects is necessary to determine the authenticity of documents and relics. They play an indispensable part in every stage of historical work from heuristics to narrative. These sciences auxiliary to history enable the historian to clarify and establish the true nature of 'historical documents' in the widest sense of the term. Among these various allied subjects palaeography occupies an important place for students of ancient Indian history. It assists in the primary tests of materials for proof of genuineness. It is absolutely necessary to know the characteristics of writing in the various epochs of its development and the exact peculiarities of any given time. A fair knowledge of Sanskrit and Dravidian languages and their main features in different ages is also indispensable to assess the authenticity of the Inscriptions of ancient India. On this subject, we have some outstanding works noticed elsewhere in this book.

The proper study of the seals of various dynasties also helps us to detect forgery in documents. The ancient dynasties used separate seals with a specific emblem and unfortunately not many have attempted to study the historical significance of these various seals. Chronology also enables us to find out the true nature of the documents. For the modern period, a knowledge of economics and politics is absolutely essential to appraise the true value of documents. More than all, knowledge of geography plays an important part in the writing of history. Thus these various techniques of research enable the historians and research workers to find out the degree of authenticity and probability of the documents. Thus the work of external criticism is mainly preliminary. It studies only the outside form of the documents. It identifies the author of the document, determines its age with the help of the various auxiliary sciences. But the internal value of the document must also be studied. The process by which the trust-

worthiness of the document is studied is known as '*Internal Criticism*.' It is mainly concerned with the inner meaning and truthfulness of a document and further investigates the mental state of the author at the time of the writing of the document. Thus the main function of the Internal Criticism is to determine what in a document may be accepted as true.

Internal criticism comprises two parts: *positive interpretative criticism* and *negative criticism*. Positive interpretative criticism mainly deals with the contents of the document with a view to find out its truth. In any document, we must determine both the literal and the real meaning of its contents. As the languages are largely subjected to continuous change from time to time we must take the literal meaning of the document. We must have a thorough study of the text itself. This helps us to understand the motive or the conception of the author. 'Criticism is above all else a gift,' said Amiel; 'an intuition, a matter of tact and flair. It cannot be taught or demonstrated. It is an art.' The Negative criticism deals with the truthfulness of the author. It examines the main conditions or circumstances under which the document was written. We must study the author's official status, and his place in society. When he wrote the document we must find out whether the author was in a position to ascertain and reveal the truth of the matters that he deals with. We must weigh the subjectivity of the author and take into consideration the questions of his liberty or of his bias. To take a single instance, the great Musalman historian Ferishta was in the court of Ibrahim Adil Shah of Bijapur. He was asked to write the Musalman history of India. He wrote the history of the Bahmani Kingdom down to 17th century. His position, his status and nationality compelled him to conceal some historical facts and to overemphasise certain matters. He could have had no liberty to express his impartial views regarding the relation between Hindus and Musalmans in South India. Almost all the Musalman historians of medieval times suffer the same disability. Thus negative criticism largely examines the nearness of the author to the events and the document.

After all this work of criticism has been achieved, the historian must concentrate his attention on the *grouping of facts*. 'This grouping of facts in a systematic order through a scientific causal genesis is known as the *Synthetic Operations* in Historical Method. The preceding method has provided us with a heterogeneous mass

of data, some of which are certain, many only probable. It is now the business of the historian to organise these data into a *complex*, unique, evolving whole, the parts of which stand in causal relation to one another' (Fling). Synthesis mainly determines how to set bounds to our subject; to divide it into various periods and sub-periods and finally to decide what facts are to come into the synthesis and in what sequence and what are to be rejected. Finally synthesis deals with the relation of causal connection which exists between the parts. Further it examines what parts of our narrative should be emphasized and what parts should be touched lightly in our narration. History is such a wide subject that it knows no beginning and no end. Each act or historical episode is the effect of some previous episode and probably leads on to another. Thus it offers or affords opportunity and scope to limit the subject matter and fix the dividing periods as far as possible. Thus this limitation of subject matter is absolutely indispensable for any researcher to carry on his work successfully. Fling rightly says that "The historian must drive a stake *in the glacier of time to mark the beginning of his task and one to mark its end.*" But the limitation of the subject matter is an automatic process and largely depends on our conception of what constitutes the unity of our subject. If we are dealing with the 'Age of the Cholas' in Indian History, the question arises when did the Cholas come into prominence and when was their end? Thus after we finish the interpretation and criticism of documents, we must group them in a scientific manner. We must ascertain which facts should form part of an historical synthesis and secondly, we must know how to combine these facts so that they form a complex whole. There are so many ways of arranging these facts. They can be arranged either chronologically or topically. Vincent Smith's Akbar is based mainly on the chronological basis. The first volume of the Cambridge History of India is based on various topics. But each method suffers from some drawbacks. They neglect one aspect or the other of History. The best system of grouping the facts is to combine both the chronological arrangement as well as the topical system. Thus in its final form, when we divide and group the main facts on the basis of their external factors or of their intrinsic worth, the synthesis will appear as a detailed, well-organised outline, showing the results of the investigation as a unique complex whole. This only forms the skeleton;

to be clothed with flesh and blood by means of vivid narrative.

Narration or *exposition* is the crowning part of the historian's work. The main principle that the historian should be guided by at the time of narration is to be objective as far as possible. He must weigh in the balance the strong and the weak points of his facts. Bias should be eliminated as far as possible. He must imbibe the spirit of these times that he is writing on. Impartiality should be his guiding principle. Besides being impartial, he should possess the command of the language in which he is writing. A forceful style is a necessary factor in writing. But historical narrative should not be the servant of style. On the other hand, style should be subordinated to historical narrative. And moralising must be kept in the background, if it could not be dispensed with. The ancient Greek and Roman historiographers like Herodotus, Thucydides, Livy and Polybius seldom aimed at the accuracy of their evidences but were concerned with the glorification of their themes in colourful language. They conceived of History as the narration of memorable events. They always chose important incidents and heroes of battles. In other words, they thought of History as a branch of didactic literature. This state of affairs continued till 18th century. Great historians like Gibbon, Hume, Robertson and Voltaire gave predominance to style and thus made history the handmaid of literature.

But as a result of the Industrial revolution and of the scientific discoveries of the 19th century, there arose a new era in Historiography. Gooch rightly observes that 19th century has been essentially regarded as *The Golden Age of Historical Thinking*. The German historians like Ranke and others introduced a new weapon into the realm of historical scholarship. They applied the main principles of historical methodology like Heuristics and Criticism of sources. They ransacked the various archives and libraries. Bibliographies were formed and insistence was laid on the credibility and accuracy of historical facts. They subordinated style to accuracy. They insisted that the narrative should reflect the character of the evidence. Each statement, they insisted, should demand the re-call of all the evidence on which it rests and its character. Source materials should be incorporated into historical narrative. Foot-notes should accompany or support each statement of the narrative. But this may be overdone as Coulanges has pointed out with mordant sarcasm : In the preface to the third

edition of his *Histoire des Institutions Politiques*—cited in the 4th edition (1914) he says :

'I must explain the difference which is apparent between this edition and its predecessors. This is more extensive and for this I have two reasons : the first is that in reading my work again, it struck me that some things were not sufficiently clear; I have had to express myself at greater length to be clearer. I have a second reason which takes me some trouble to explain. I belong to a generation, no longer young and in which workers imposed two rules on themselves ; to study a subject from all known sources and then to present only the results of their researches to the reader ; they spared themselves the display of erudition, the erudition being only for the author and not the reader ; some indications at the foot of the pages sufficed for the reader whom they invited to verify. For about 20 years the usual methods have changed. The practice to-day is to present to the reader a display of erudition rather than results. They value the scaffolding more than the construction, and erudition has changed its forms and processes ; it is no longer profound and there is no exactitude to-day ; but erudition nevertheless seeks a display. Before all they must all appear learned. Many value the appearance more than the reality. Once we deliberately sacrificed appearance ; now it is some times the reality that is sacrificed. At bottom both the methods are equally good, if loyally practised. The one ruled about 25 years ago when I wrote many first works, the other prevails at the present day. I conform to the taste of to-day, like the old who do not have the bad taste to persist in their past habits. My researches will change, then, not fundamentally, but in their form. Or better, I admit, they change only in appearance, and this is why when I wrote first, the early redaction was precisely like the present one, long bristling with texts, and full of discussion. But this first draft I kept back for myself, and I took six months to abridge it for the reader. To-day, it is the first draft that I shall give here.'

Thus exposition is the crowning part of the historian's work. It constitutes the characteristic and salient feature of ideal history books and historians. It demands accuracy and impartiality from the research workers and investigators. It insists on the subordination of style and language to precision and fidelity.

Thus a scientific method is an important aspect of historical investigation and research which must be followed by one and all.

CHAPTER 3

PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

The word 'History' can be used in two senses : (1) the sum-total of man's past doings and experiences, and (2) the narrative account of such actions by a modern historian. Likewise 'Philosophy of History' may also be thought of in two ways. It may be taken to concern itself with the actual events as they occurred and try to discover their meaning and purpose, and this is the sense accepted generally by writers on the subject in the nineteenth century. The second meaning of 'history' points to an enquiry into the nature of a historian's thought and the character of the method followed by him ; the critical discipline that is contemplated by this second meaning has engaged our attention in the bulk of the preceding chapters. It is necessary, before concluding our study, to say something on the more speculative, and occasionally even metaphysical sense of the term Philosophy of History.

The attempt to discover a plan or pattern of historical events is perhaps as old as history itself (in both its senses). For long ages, in fact till well on in the nineteenth century, historical narration was a branch of literature and often had a religious and theological association ; and the historians of those days, such as they were, often sought to justify the ways of God and men, or at least to unfold to them the inner meaning and purpose of the events they witnessed. These attempts were based on a belief in the progressive moral and spiritual degradation or elevation of man, his descent or ascent in progressive stages. Examples are furnished by the Indian myth of vast chronological cycles, each divisible into four epochs, which are the stages through which the universe and its inhabitants must pass from perfection to destruction, from strength and innocence to weakness and depravity until a new *maha-yuga* begins ; Mahayana Buddhism representing Buddha as animated by a boundless charity, and affection embracing every class of society and every living creature—as voluntarily forging for myriads of years final beatitude (*nirvana*), and voluntarily enduring through numberless births the most manifold trials and afflictions, in order to work out salvation for all sentient beings ; the Christian idea of a divine plan by which Kingdoms rise and fall in order that a purpose of God regarding man might be realised ; St. Augus-

tine's elaboration of the idea in 'Civitate Dei' which made the fall or sin of Adam the turning point of human history; Bossuet's *Discourse on Universal History* and the Italian Philosopher Vico's *New Science* (1725-30) which looked upon human evolution as a spiral process in which similar, if not the same, situations recurred at higher levels; and many others.

The elder Pliny has exhorted us 'firmly to trust that the ages go on increasingly improving,' and indeed the 'Idea of Progress' became more or less an accepted dogma of subsequent ages, particularly the nineteenth century. This view of history was not always religious or theological in its affiliation. The epoch of enlightenment and the Encyclopaedists of France furnish a notable secular counterpart. They too were convinced that history was leading to some morally satisfactory goal and sought to trace a pattern in historical change; they too had faith in progress and in the perfectibility of man. The advance of physical sciences in the nineteenth century had its own influence on historical thought and set some historians to engage in the quest of historical laws of more or less the same type as the laws of physical science of the nature of observed uniformities, though even the most enthusiastic of such seekers could not overlook the chief handicap of the historian, *viz.* that the method of controlled experiments with a view to verify his laws was not open to him. Comte and the Positivists were foremost here, but there was no lack of others as well. The French writer Odyssé-Barot (1864) for instance formulated three very dubious laws which are, however, not devoid of interest to students of India's history. The three laws were: (1) Nationality is the product of a river basin (*Une nationalite, c'est un bassin*); (2) a natural boundary is a mountain (*une frontiere, c'est une montagne*); and (3) 'The world oscillates between two systems of society; simple and compound societies; natural nationalities and artificial agglomerations; peoples with frontiers and peoples without them; the system of small states and the system of great empire.' Another and a closely allied view found in some writers is that human history is subject to certain laws manifested in the development of every nation or culture, each of which 'not only does but must go through the same series of stages,' *e.g.*, the ages of Gods, heroes and men according to Vico; theology, metaphysics, and positive sciences according to Comte; or the four stages of Spengler.

Hegel is perhaps the foremost of modern thinkers in this sphere and his 'philosophy of history must be ranked among those which have best borne out the claim to be a Theodicy, a vindication of the ways of God to man, which have done most to show that the history of the world is the product of an infinite and active reason' (Flint). He had remarkable forerunners in Kant, Schelling, Herder and Fichte. It is difficult and perhaps invidious to seek to summarise briefly the complex systems of thought put forward by so many forceful thinkers, but there is no other way of dealing with so large a subject within the scope of a book like this. To Kant (*Idea of a universal History from a cosmopolitan point of view*, 1784), history becomes tolerable despite first appearances because he sees in it a rational process proceeding on an intelligible plan through hidden tracks to a morally desirable goal *viz.* a world order or state with a political constitution perfect both from the internal and external points of view, a society which 'combines with the greatest possible freedom, and in consequence antagonism of its members, the most rigid determination and guarantee of the limits of this freedom, in such a way that the freedom of each individual may co-exist with that of others'—a liberal society with full play for private enterprise. In the historical process the fortunes of individuals may suffer, but those of the race are secure in the long run. This view of history is obviously *a priori* and external, and not one that arises out of the study of historical events and research into historical facts and evidence bearing on them ; it is just a way of looking at ascertained history with which one may or may not agree according to one's own experience and understanding of selected facts.

Herder (*b.* 1744) who was twenty years younger than Kant published his *Ideas for a Philosophical History of Mankind* in the same year as Kant's celebrated essay mentioned above, in fact a few months earlier. His intuitive and emotional approach to History is a complete contrast to Kant's cool and critical temper. Herder lays stress on the rolé of geographical and climatic factors in human evolution and lays stress on the peculiarities of races ; his great work was in fact the model for Hegel's treatment of History. Herder recognizes the working of natural laws in the unfoldment of history and holds that the flowering of a civilization is as natural as that of a rose ; he has no use for any appeal to miracle or mystery in understanding the historical process. The

purpose of that process is, according to Herder, the attainment of humanity, a state in which man fulfils himself by reaching the highest stature he is capable of. He implies that man can promote this end by his own endeavour, but does not explain how this can be reconciled with his idea of the working of natural laws in history.

Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* were published posthumously in 1837, more than fifty years after Herder's *Ideas*. Hegel's view of History is bound up with the whole of his Philosophical System, and it is not easy to convey an adequate idea of it in a few sentences. Concepts of pure reason, logical concepts, form, according to him, a self-generating series—thesis, antithesis and synthesis, the synthesis becoming in turn a thesis and generating a new series, and so on. The highest form of this, the supertriad, is furnished by the antithesis between Ideas and Nature finding the synthesis in Spirit. To Hegel the real is the rational, and on his view the philosophical historian seeks to illuminate history by 'elevating empirical contents to the rank of necessary truth.' The clue to World History is furnished by the Idea of Freedom: 'Freedom is the sole truth of spirit.' In the Oriental World (China, Babylonia, Egypt) freedom was for only one man—the monarch; in the Greco-Roman World, in spite of slavery, the area of freedom was more extended, the citizens if not all individuals claiming it as a right. Among the Germanic nations of modern Europe, the process has been completed and the Christian principle of the worth of the individual is accepted as the basis of social and political life. This progress has been achieved by the dialectic process, in which each nation or people serves as a unit with its own contribution to make, 'its religion, its political institutions, its moral code, its system of law, its *mores*, even its science and art, and the level of mechanical aptitude it attains.' Each nation has its own hour, and when that hour strikes, other nations give way to it. Another feature of Hegel's philosophy of History is his doctrine of moving forces in historical change, which allows for the play of human passions in the realization of Reason's great design. The aims and methods of the chosen instruments of destiny like Caesar or Alexander are not to be judged by ordinary moral standards, for 'so mighty a form must trample down many an innocent flower, crush to pieces many objects in its path.' The apparent good of the individual can be no criterion in this 'social

ethics' in the light of which Hegel's concept of freedom must be understood. Hegel repudiated natural rights, and held that the freedom of the community as a whole was the goal of history; but the community was not separate from the individuals comprising it and realized itself in them.

The influence of Hegel's thought on modern historiography is large and undoubted. His stress on the importance of the past for the understanding of the present was not known so much in the eighteenth century, and came to mark all historical writing after his time. It made history a purposeful and critical study, different from the chronicle, and the immense development of historical thought in the nineteenth century was in no small measure due to Hegel's influence. Nevertheless Hegel's approach to History is open to criticism from many sides. The whole attempt has struck many historians as an effort 'to impose a preconceived pattern on the course of events,' to assume the course of history before the facts are known, 'to deduce the details of history from the categories of logic.' Again the moral element in the explanation which aims at leaving one morally satisfied, or at least not morally dissatisfied, is not of any interest to the historian as such. Further, the Hegelian interpretation of history is able to maintain itself only by arbitrarily eliminating from history all except one nation at a time. It has been said also that Hegel 'thought history a rational process because it culminated in the Prussian state in whose service he himself worked.' But this cheap jibe cannot apply to Hegel who was by no means a narrow provincial. A more serious criticism takes another line; since history is still an uncompleted process how can you say that its culmination is in the present, or indeed determine its goal at all? 'America,' says Hegel somewhere in his lectures, 'is the land of the future, where, in the ages that lie before us, the burden of the world's history will reveal itself,' but he does not explain how this is to be fitted into his scheme.

Some reference has been made already to the French writer Auguste Comte and his followers—the Positivists. With great trust in the universal competence of Science, they tried to apply the methods of the positive sciences to social data and evolve a new science of social dynamics. Comte believed he had made an important discovery which he formulated, into his law of the three stages of human progress; 'Theological' in which man accounted

for events by ascribing them to the operation of a controlling spirit or spirits; 'Metaphysical' in which abstract natural forces replace the spirit or spirits as motive forces behind events; and 'Positive' or 'Scientific' in which these fictions are abandoned and phenomena are recorded and accounted for as they occur. He applied this law to the history of Europe: Greece, Rome and the Middle Ages fall into the first stage; with the Renaissance, begins the second stage—a period of criticism and the breakdown of the old order culminating in the French Revolution; after which we came to the 'Positivist era, only partially accomplished, which is to revive many of the features of medieval Christendom, with the important differences that it will rest on Science and not on superstition, and that its pontiff will be not the Pope but Auguste Comte.' In Comte's system, as in Hegel's philosophy, the course of history is determined by considerations not relevant to it, and facts are forced into a preconceived framework constructed to suit the personal prejudices of its founder. But Positivists were responsible for some brilliant historical writing, witness Frederick Harrison's *Meaning of History* and other works. The main thesis of the positivist school in history is untenable, but it indirectly promoted critical methods of study, though its programme of deriving so-called laws had no attraction for historians. And both the metaphysical and positivist movements failed signally to recognize that History is an autonomous discipline with aims and methods of its own, certainly standing in close relation to other social sciences, but incapable of being resolved into any of them.

Comte is now almost forgotten; but Marx is a live force. Born in 1818, when Hegel was at the height of his powers, Karl Marx entered the university of Berlin in 1836 when the Hegelian Philosophy was still under active discussion. Marx's thought cannot be understood except in the light of Hegelian influence on it. In fact Marx keeps Hegel's dialectic, but reverses his fundamental position and says that Matter precedes Spirit. Hegel, as we noted, postulated a national spirit as the medium through which economic, political and cultural aspects of a nation's life interacted; Marx enthroned the economic aspect as of supreme import, and sought to explain the rest with it—the celebrated Economic Interpretation of History set forth in the Communist Manifesto of 1848. And Marx's goal was a classless society, the economic class taking the place in his system of thinking that

is held by the nation in Hegel's. There is doubtless an element of truth in Marx's contention ; but it is far from being a complete account of the social process. Marx despised both the Positivists and the Utilitarians, but nevertheless had many affinities to them. He aimed at a positive scientific foundation for history as much as Comte, and practical reform was his aim quite as much as of Bentham. Marx is best understood as having laid emphasis on the economic background of events as their best elucidation, and this is perhaps more true of the epoch of capitalism than of the preceding ages. In any case, Marx's contribution to the philosophy of history was not much, though his influence on Communist thought and revolution can hardly be overestimated.

Two recent attempts at interpretation have aroused considerable discussion all over the world. Spengler's *Decline of the West : an Outline of a Morphology of History* treats history as a series of completed cycles, not a succession of stages in a continuous development. Each civilisation passes from childhood to old age and death, and there is a succession of such civilisations. Gooch admirably sums up and criticises Spengler in the following terms : ' Western Civilisation is the latest of these recurring cycles, which advance and recede like the tide on a shelving beach. For the familiar chronological sequence ancient, mediaeval, modern—which is only applicable to Europe, Western Asia and North-East Africa, he substitutes four cycles, Indian, Arabian, Antique and Western, the latter beginning about A.D. 900. Each is subdivided into Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter. The civilisation of the West, now entering its winter months and replacing spiritual activities by practical aims, has only about a couple of centuries to run. Spengler discovers no enduring progress, no guiding spirit, no ultimate goal, merely an endless repetition of approximately similar experience.' To Indian students this recalls the old Hindu theory of *Yugas* and *Mahayugas* punctuated with *pralayas* of varying intensity and duration.

Much superior to Spengler's sombre tomes is Arnold Toynbee's *Study of History,* recently completed in 10 Vols. hailed by Gooch as 'perhaps the most significant achievement of English scholarship since Frazer's *Golden Bough.*' Toynbee, like Spengler, envisages history as a record of civilisations rather than of centuries and continents. But in every other respect the two writers are poles apart. Spengler is a quasi-biological determinist who holds that

all civilisations are fated to die, and that the future will be as the past. Toynbee, on the other hand, holds that modern man, unlike his ancestors, has an accumulated store of memories and knowledge which open to him a fair chance of averting the doom. Toynbee also differs from Marx ; he rejects the simplified view of history as a struggle for economic control and lays stress on the significance of spiritual factors. His outlook is more biological than mechanical.

In one sense Toynbee's concern with universal history is a deliberate break off from the professional standards of historians developed towards the end of the nineteenth century which tended increasingly towards minute specialisation and the monograph. He insists on longer views and perspectives. His aim is not a modern version of the older philosophies of history reviewed earlier in this chapter, but a comparative study of civilisations, of which he enumerates twenty-one, with a view to establish the typical life cycle of a civilisation. His study proceeds on empirical lines, the documentation is detailed, and there is little selection of facts to suit a theory or preconceived framework. He finds the key to the geneses of civilisations in the group's response to the challenge set by its physical or human environment. But the number of instances studied is small and by no means homogeneous.

One reflection that arises in relation to Toynbee's approach to history is that it finds no room for the role of 'Great Men,' for 'the capricious and apparently unaccountable appearance of men of genius' and its result on the course of events. In fact, as Fisher points out, 'what no one has yet succeeded in doing is to account for his emergence at all.' We may perhaps note also some other observations of the same critic, who pays a high tribute to the learning and breadth of outlook marking Toynbee's work. 'The generalisations are sometimes overdriven,' and Toynbee has not altogether escaped the dangers of 'pattern history' ; for Toynbee sees in the past not only pattern, but rhythm. 'Our enthusiastic guide is enchanted by the notion of rhythmical alterations of stability and movement, repose and turbulence, divine peace and diabolic unrest, which the Chinese designate under the names of Yin and Yang. In the great operatic performance of humanity he detects the recurrence of this leitmotiv of Yin and Yang. Other ears will be less sensitive to the regularity of the Chinese beat.' Lastly Toynbee's work is more akin to a branch of Sociology than

to history ; in fact he has not transformed history, but brought into existence a new study which can hardly be included under the same caption as history as we have known it so far.

CHAPTER 4

THE SOURCES OF HISTORY IN RELATION TO INDIAN HISTORY

History as a subject of study is more or less completely at the mercy of its sources. History deals with the past of a people or a country on the basis only of the traces or records it leaves behind; and the discovery of such traces and records of a past that is dead and buried is itself an independent and arduous job which must be completed before History can begin.

Thus History has to work under hard conditions and often with tough and intractable material. It does not deal with the present or the future, but only with accomplished facts and dead realities, with what has been, and not with what is or what ought to be, and thus lacks the living interest of current events or the romance of reforms and ideas.

Then again History may not treat the records as it may choose but must treat them as it finds them. It must allow the records to tell their own tale, must let the evidence speak for itself. It cannot twist or tamper with or manufacture the evidence. It must remain observant and receptive of all reflections and reproduce the sources faithfully like a mirror or a photograph without trying to modernise the past, and without suppressing or omitting evidence that tells against a pet theory or rooted prejudice.

It is also a job to recover the records of the past. The historian has to find them, very often by hard and sustained labour in muniment rooms or by well planned schemes of archaeological exploration followed by prolonged excavation bringing to light buried antiquities of by-gone ages. His next task is no less hard. It is, when the records are recovered, to find out the truth, especially when they are conflicting. He must then, like the Judge, sift the evidence, interrogate the facts and find his way to truth through a maze of contradictions and sometimes studied distortions. Indeed, truth dawns when it does only on a judicial mind free from bias or pre-conceived notions.

Thus the historical sources are the remains of man's unique activities in a society. The historian never faces the facts directly, like the natural scientist. He sees only the residue of the fact,

Without a critical study of these materials no part of the historical past can be reconstructed.

The materials of history fall into two groups : *Remains* and *Records*. Remains are of two kinds, of which the first is bodily or skeletal remains. The archives of the earth offer us their testimony. The graves give up their dead. Such personal remains, together with the places in which they are found, and the things made by man that accompany them, tell us of the great antiquity of man. They tell us that he lived on the planet many thousands of years before any of the civilizations came up of which we have written records. The second group of remains are the things man has made, things of war and things of peace, things of utility and of decoration. Archaeology, the science of antiquity, is the special study devoted to these things ; with their aid we learn of the life and culture of distant lands and times. Frequently they, especially the earliest among them, are superior in authenticity to many written records. The knowledge we derive from things left by an old civilization is sometimes more explicit and certain than a written statement. Their meaning and significance have to be won from them by intelligent and trained insight.

Another kind of materials is records. Records are those materials of history written or printed that have been made deliberately for the purpose of transmitting information. They are, generally, of much later date, than many remains. These records are generally known as literary sources of history. These literary sources include religious works, chronicles, ballads, historical dramas and epics.

The above sources are of two fundamental kinds, *primary* and *secondary*. A primary or original record is one that testifies of its own knowledge, or which at least for us is a fountain source of information. The worth of a primary source is measured by its opportunities for knowing the truth and by its power and will to tell the truth. The best original sources are, in general, contemporary with the events to which they relate or nearly so. To take one single instance, the inscriptions of Asoka are the primary sources for the study of the reign of Asoka. They were issued directly under his orders. The true way to know the men whose lives are the history of their age is to come as close to them as the barriers of time, distance and language will allow ; to seek always the original sources first, at least under the briefest guidance

and exposition; never to satisfy ourselves with dissertations, abridgements, compendia or secondary historians; to listen to each man's words, so far as we have ability or opportunity, in the tongue he learned from his mother, and talked with his own kinsfolk, and wrote with his own pen. A single page read in that way brings us nearer to the man, gives us better, so to speak, the feel of his pulse, the light of his eye and the complexion of his face, than whole chapters of paraphrase and commentary.

A secondary source is one that borrows its knowledge from others. The best secondary records are, in general, the latest; but to this there are many exceptions. For the same history of Asoka, the Junagadh Inscription of Rudradaman is a secondary evidence. This inscription was issued three centuries later than the reign of Asoka by an altogether different person. It gives us an insight into the administrative problems and arrangements of the time of Asoka. To take another instance, the travel chronicle of Ibn Batuta forms a primary source for the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlak, whereas the *Tarikh-i-Ferishta* written by Ferishta forms a secondary source for the same reign as it belongs to a much later time. Ferishta compiled his chronicle in the 16th century, three centuries after the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlak.

In reading both primary and secondary records, it is generally best to read all the printed materials first; otherwise much time may be lost in doing over again work that has already been done satisfactorily. And the printed material will often point to the existence, whereabouts, and character of unpublished matter.

With this general background, let us proceed to indicate the various sources for the reconstruction of Indian History from the earliest period down to modern times.

The sources for the study of Ancient Indian History down to 1200 A.D. may be broadly classified into two groups: (1) Literary (2) Archaeological.

Literary sources: We use the term 'Literary' in a very wide sense, not in its usual restricted sense. To the historian every written document, from which we shall exclude inscriptions and writings on coins, is literature. Every piece of literature so defined is a document, and in dealing with written documents the historian has to protect himself by certain very necessary safeguards.

The first danger against which he has to protect himself is that of falling a victim to a deliberately falsified record. One

might think that deliberate falsification is rare. But we are rather apt to underestimate the chances of deliberate falsifications. Here is what a recent writer says : ' Nothing can deceive like a document. Here lies the value of the war of 1914-18 as a training ground for historians. . . . Pure documentary history seems to be akin to mythology. . . . When the British front was broken in March 1918, and the French reinforcements came to help in filling the gap, an eminent French General arrived at a certain army corps headquarters and there majestically dictated orders giving the line on which his troops would stand that night and start their counter-attack in the morning. After reading it with some perplexity the British Corps Commander exclaimed : " But that line is behind the German front ; you lost it yesterday." To which he received the reply made with a knowing smile : "*C'est pour l'histoire*—that is for history".

This is a very modern instance and a very clearly stated one ; a deliberate attempt to falsify history. The False Decretals or the False Donation of Constantine upon which many disputes in the Middle Ages turned, and a very suspicious account on which the whole story of the Black Hole of Calcutta rests, are instances in point of more or less deliberate and international falsifications of other times.

Even when there is no conscious and deliberate falsification of documents, the task of the historian is difficult enough. For at best, as Von Sybel observes : ' Every narrator of events reports to us not the events themselves, but the impression which he has received of them. In this process of representation, however, there is always mingled, after an experience, a subjective element ; and to regain the true picture of events by eliminating this subjective element is the task of historical criticism.'

When we come to recent times, however, the task of the historian becomes in some ways more difficult and in others less so. The mass of documents becomes so great that no one can hope to deal successfully with more than a relatively small section of them. On the other hand, we often find ourselves in a position to compare the narratives of the same events by different witnesses, written perhaps from different and sometimes complementary points of view, and this makes for an easier and more authoritative ascertainment of the true course of things.

Another source of trouble against which the historian has to

guard himself is the possibility of his mistaking boastfulness for fact. Charles IX declared that he organised the massacre of St. Bartholomew. He had really nothing to do with it. It might look strange that a man should claim to be at the bottom of a massacre. But notions of self-interest and virtue change with the times. We may think of the analogous case in our local *puranas* where we read that 8000 Jains were impaled in Madura at the instance of one of our saints ; and you have an annual festival in commemoration of this pious achievement. In these cases, out of a false sense of values, men have been eager to paint themselves blacker than they really were. And one should be slow to infer from the legend behind the Madura festival that any Jains were actually impaled, and much less 8000 of them as a matter of fact.

Thirdly, there is the exaggeration that is characteristic of Court Poetry. Most of the good qualities you can think of are attributed to the patron. And his heroism in the field of war often results in almost every known country sending him tribute. And the choice of qualities and countries for mention is often governed by requirements of metre and rhythm ; and one needs some experience to be able to distinguish history couched in an ornate literary style from ' pure poetry.' In describing the prosperity of the court, our poets would think of nothing less than golden gates for palaces. Whenever we read of golden gates we can reasonably be sure only of this : that gold was known and that palaces had gates.

A fourth kind of difficulty arises in dealing with literature which embodies legends, legendary literature. Niebuhr, one of the founders of modern historical method, describes legend in very striking terms. He calls it a mirage produced by an invisible object according to an unknown law of refraction. But Neibuhr himself trafficked in legends very largely, and in his reconstruction of Early Roman History he employed a method which has since been called ' the method of divination.'

It is said that the Chinese have a favourite method of writing their history. The chronological accuracy of the Chinese narratives is sometimes almost staggering. Their historical sense is sometimes quite unique. Yet when the Chinese wanted to reconstruct the past of their race, the learned Mandarin tried to distil History from the Mythology of his country by the simple process of removing the mythical element from the old assortment of local legends, romances

and heroic poetry, and then dished up the residue in the form of a continuous narrative, and called it a history of the country. Such efforts to distil history from legend are not by any means confined to China and Chinese historians. We have to be very careful in dealing with the matter that is on the face of it legendary or matter that even raises the suspicion that it may be legendary. Of this second class it is necessary to give examples. Many Buddhist accounts make the Buddha a contemporary of Prasenajit, Pradyota and Udayana. It is a question whether we do not have here a tendency to gather round the Buddha some famous legendary figures rather than to give a historical account of his contemporaries.

Then there is the verse about the Nine Gems of Vikramaditya's Court. No historian has succeeded in completely elucidating that verse and reconciling all the known data with it.

Again we have the story of the three Tamil Sangams, which is on the face of it a stupendous legend, but yet it has passed for history. And people insist again and again in South India on our talking only of the Third Sangam. And one is not sure again that the same tendency is not at work in modern historical research. The Gupta Age has come to exercise such a fascination on the mind of the Indian historian as a period when Hindu culture attained its acme that there is growing up a tendency among scholars to ascribe to the Gupta period almost any author who does not find a place elsewhere. So we are building up a new legend of Gupta ascendancy in all walks of life. It is possible, however, that sometimes this line of criticism is carried too far. For instance, the tradition relating to the *ashtadiggajas* the eight famous men of letters of the court of Krishnadeva Raya, fell under unmerited suspicion and is now seen to conform to facts of history.

You must also suspect that certain recurrent *motifs* are of a clearly legendary character. Take Trinetra, the man with three eyes, we mean Trinetra Pallava, Trinetra Kadamba and so on. When we get Trinetras in different texts, invariably mentioned in very edifying contexts, we must stop to think whether it is history or legend we are being treated to.

Then take the often-told tale of the step-mother's love for the heir-apparent to the throne. The *motif* occurs with reference to Aṣoka's queen Tishyarakshita and Kunala, and also in the stories of a much later time in Deccan, *viz.* in the stories of Sarngadhara and Kumara Ramanna. One does not know if one can attach

any value to these tales. We have then the whole set of foundation-myths which have got to be rejected as history—the love of a sage or a prince for a Nagi maiden, or a girl from the Patala, which results in the foundation of a royal family e.g. the Pallavas in South India and the royal dynasties of Kambuja and Champa in Indo-China. Then there is the legend of the origin of the Agnikulas, that relating to the migration of the Yadavas, and the stories told of different dynasties, that their ancestors originally ruled in Ayodhya or Ahicchatra and that they migrated to the Deccan and the South.

But the 'contempt of history for fiction' in the words of George Gordon, 'may be overdone.' The hard-worked historian, in his excusable preoccupation with the truth, is inclined to be impatient of fables even when they are the fables of a race. But myths like those we have mentioned are 'infectious and pervasive,' colour men's minds and influence actions. They are often solemnly recited in state documents, and portrayed in sculpture and painting of high quality. Legends which have so largely moulded men's minds and conduct have a claim on the historian which he cannot lightly set aside. In his *Abraham, Recent Discoveries and Hebrew Origins* (1935) Leonard Woolley has examined how far Hebrew Tradition has been confirmed by the excavations at Ur and shown that though we get no direct evidence on the events of Abraham's life or even of his name, still when properly intrepreted, Tradition and Archaeology light up each other in a remarkable manner.

At this point we may perhaps briefly refer to the evidence of comparative philology which is a valuable aid to the historian, especially for the pre-historic period to which no written records directly relate. Within its proper limits, the comparative study of languages has provided valuable glimpses into the past to be got in no other way. But to base large inferences upon stray and casual similarities in sound is one of the most dangerous temptations to which some students of history are apt to fall a prey. We have a wild account that Karikala traversed the whole of North India and reached the Himalayas. As a matter of fact this story is unknown to the earlier poets celebrating his exploits and occurs only in some relatively late works. But because there happens to occur among the names of Tibetan passes of the Himalayas a name which sounds like Chola pass, it has been held that this name, Chola pass, is sufficient proof that Karikala Chola must have gone

there on an expedition. Or take another instance which is equally illustrative of this kind of error. The tendency has become very strong of late to discover the influence of pre-Aryan inhabitants upon the growth of Indian Civilization. It has been felt by some scholars for some time that Indian History has been approached from the wrong end. To start from the North and advance to the South, to give a predominant place to the Aryan influence and to ignore the pre-Aryan inhabitants of the country and the part they played in the shaping of Hindu culture,—that is said to have been a great mistake of modern historical reconstruction. There is some justification for this view and the non-Aryan elements in Hindu culture are rightly claiming an increasing share of the attention of scholars to-day. But when the frenzy of the new attempt leads one scholar to suggest that the name 'Hanuman' is derived from the Tamil phrase 'Anmandi,' and another to contend seriously that Sinhalese is a language of the 'Dravidian' group, it is time for us to cry halt and to ask ourselves if this reaction is really not being carried too far.

Comparative philology is not without its uses even in the study of historical times. The expansion of the Tamils and Telugus across the Bay of Bengal is attested by the admixture of many words from these languages in the Malay vocabulary, and Prof. Von Ronkel has done much good work in tracing several Malay words to their South Indian sources. Similar work has been done for some East African languages as well. Again many a moot point in the historical geography of Malay Peninsula and Archipelago has to be settled by a patient comparison of names of places in many languages principally Chinese, Arabic and Malay. Personal and place names are reproduced in a foreign language sometimes by transliterations and at other times by translations; yet other methods are also known. The study and correct interpretation of these data require much patient and cautious scholarship. Lastly, the method can be applied to the history of any settled language and its literature, and by this means one can trace the external influences to which the people speaking the language have been exposed, and the extent to which their life has been affected by them. The grammar and prosody of Tamil, for instance, and the vocabulary of the language when studied from this point of view may be expected to yield very striking results. The *Tamil Lexicon* contains valuable hints under individual words,

but it is no substitute for a systematic study which, besides lighting up the different phases of the history of Tamils, may well be calculated to show how misplaced is the cry that is sometimes raised in favour of 'pure Tamil.' And the same thing will be found true of the other languages of South India. We may now review briefly the classes of literary evidence that are available to students of Indian History. Here literature falls into two broad classes, *Indigenous literature* and *Foreign literature.*

Indigenous literature is contained in several languages, Sanskrit, Prakrit and Pali, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada and in later times Persian and Marathi. Obviously it is not possible to review all this literature in any detail here. Still a few remarks may be offered on the different types of literature in these different languages.

Beyond a shadow of doubt, Vedic literature is the oldest of the literatures of North India and Tamil literature of South India. Telugu and Kannada come later and their literary beginnings may be roughly put somewhere about the 8th century A.D.

The first division is general literature or belles-lettres. Here the historian generally finds his data in the prefaces and colophons which usually give descriptions of the author and his works, the place of his birth and residence, his patron, the patron's achievements and so on. And really a considerable volume of historical information has been gathered by the study of prefaces and colophons of general works of literature. But not all prefaces and colophons can pass unchallenged. The colophons of the different verses of the Tamil anthology *Purananuru* were attacked rather sharply by the late P.T. Srinivasa Iyengar, but it seemed that the attack had been carried too far in that case. But a crucial case, in which one finds it difficult to make up one's mind, is the preface to the *Silappadikaram* and *Manimekalai,* two works to which have been assigned various dates ranging from the first to the 8th century A.D. There are good grounds to hold that they do not stand in the same class with Sangam Literature ; in spite of the fact that the Payiram of the *Silappadikaram* makes the authors of the two works contemporaries of each other and of Seran Senguttuvan, one of the foremost monarchs of the Sangam period, both the works betray many unmistakable signs that, at least in their present form, they do not go back to the same age as, say, the *Pattupattu* or *Purananuru.* We have also the curious statement that Gajabahu I of

Ceylon was a contemporary of both these authors. One canto of the *Manimekalai* is seen to contain evidence of its having been revised, and revised badly, by a later author. But whether the two original authors were contemporaries with each other and with Gajabahu of Ceylon, and whether we have some other means of explaining the data furnished by these works, are still open questions. They cannot be answered adequately without a far more systematic and critical study of these works than they have so far received. The uncertainty of literary data can be seen also from the facts that the date of Kalidasa, the foremost of India's poets, is still debated ; and from the utterly composite character of the epics, Puranas and other works like the *Manusmriti* each made up of several strata of different epochs.

Besides belles-lettres, we have several works which though they go by the name of commentaries, are often more or less independent criticisms of original texts and are of at least as much value to the historian as the texts themselves. In Sanskrit, Patanjali, Sabara and Sankara are independent thinkers who chose to relate their thoughts to extant texts of high authority rather than commentators strictly so called ; at any rate their own contributions are not less important than those of the texts they discussed. In Tamil the various commentaries on the *Tolkappiyam*, the great commentary of the *Tiruvayamoli*, the *Idu*, and other commentaries on other works, famous ones like that of Adiyarkkunallar, Parimelalagar, and so on, furnish interesting evidence of great value. As the historical data that we gather from the commentaries are casual statements with no ulterior purpose or motive behind them, their value is very great.

We have another type which is not so valuable, puranic and legendary literature. Sthalapuranas are very late and generally worthless for purposes of history. But of more value when discreetly used, are the biographies of saints, such as those contained in the *Periyapuranam*, the great treasure house of 'Saiva hagiology." The *Guruparampara* takes a similar position in the Vaishnava system.

Then we take another class of literature. It is quasi-historical in character and from it a historian can expect to gain better aid than from puranic and legendary lore. Here again the historian has to guard against the influence of literary conventions in shaping the thought of the poet, and he must not accept as facts mere

repetitions of conventional statements. There are different types of quasi-historical poems in Tamil. Take the *Ula* for instance. The classic instance here is furnished by the *ulas* of Ottakkuttan on three successive Chola monarchs. The *Ula*, however, should not be understood to include all the *Ulas* on deities and legendary figures ; and in one case, the *Ekambaranathar ula*, it is not clear from the poem itself whether its hero is the deity of Kanchipuram, or a Sambuvaraya of the same name. These remarks apply to the similar compositions of the *Kovai*, *Parani* and *Kalambakam*.

The earliest instances we have of this type of poems are really quasi-historical. The later imitations generally take to legendary themes. From the historian's point of view this tendency must be characterised as a degeneration. The *Pandikkovai*, large portions of which are available in citations in commentaries and anthologies, is one of the earliest *Kovais*. Not quite so valuable is *Kulottungan Kovai* on Kulottunga III, a poem which remains anonymous. *Kalingattupparani* holds a high place as a source of history. It deals with the story of the Kalinga expedition of the time of Kulottunga I and incidentally sheds much welcome light on a critical period of Chola History. There are other *paranis* which are not half so valuable for history. The anonymous *Nandikkalambakam* is a good example of its type ; it is a poem on Pallava Nandivarman III.

We then come to works of the type of chronicles. We have chronicles of many sorts. Some of them are more useful than others ; all of them more dependable in some parts than in others. Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*, though often called the Kashmir Chronicle, attains almost the level of a regular history. The author laid down some correct principles of historical writing for himself, though he was not able to observe them always owing to the defects in the sources accessible to him. It cannot be repeated too often that the admission of any statement into a historical account is justified only after it has passed through the process of critical appraisal. Take a work like *Keralotpatti*. This work is available in a number of versions. They are all of them late. There is much in common among all these versions, but every version differs from every other in some respects. Much of the narrative in the beginning is obviously legendary, but when you come to more recent times, these various versions of *Keralotpatti* throw out sometimes very useful hints. In a somewhat better case

is a more closely written chronicle, *Maduraittalavaralaru*, which, as its name indicates, deals with the history of the Madura temple. It does not pretend to give the whole of the history. It is naturally more detailed on the modern side. It will be a useful work for some scholar to undertake a critical edition of this chronicle tested by epigraphical and other data that are now accessible to us. Of the same class, but on the whole less reliable, and in some respects more interesting, is the *Koyilolugu* which deals with the history of the Srirangam temple in the manner in which the *Maduraittala varalaru* deals with that of the Madura temple. A similar work on the temple of *Kalahasti* is also said to be in the possession of the priest of the temple. It does not seem to have been examined yet by any student of history. Then we have *Madala Panji*, the chronicle of the temple of Jagannatha at Puri, a quaint record of no great historical value, though otherwise interesting. The *Prithiviraj Raso* is another case in point, the *raso* being later and apparently less dependable than the Sanskrit *Prithiviraja Vijaya* from Kashmir. There is reason to think that many of these historical chronicles were brought up to date from time to time unlike the *sthala puranas* which were unitary compositions of single poets. The *Kongudesarajakkal* is another chronicle which has been on the whole rather overrated by students of South Indian History. Of course there are parts of this chronicle which will escape this condemnation. For instance, certain statements regarding early Chola history in the *Kongudesarajakkal* have been strikingly confirmed by authentic epigraphical evidence. How such accurate statements got mixed up with so much that is mere gossip is a problem. We still know little of the processes by which these chronicles came into existence. They deserve careful and critical study too. We have some more typical chronicles like the *Keladinripa Vijaya*, *The Karnatakarajakkal*, *Savistara Charitre*, the Kala Jnana literature and so on. But these works are of later origin. They belong to the medieval and modern periods of Indian History. We shall reserve the study of the value of these Chronicles for a later stage.

Next to the chronicles we have the Ballads. The value of Ballads can hardly be under-estimated for the study of Ancient history of India. The ballad is a simple popular poem devoid of high poetic ambition. Ballads are for the market place and the "blind crowder or for the rustic chorus that sings the ballad.

burden." Some recent historical events have been cast into this form of narration eminently fitted for oral circulation among the people. *The Ramappayyan ammanai* and the *Desinga Rajan Kadai* are typical instances of this class. These ballads are not without value even as supplements to other sources on questions of facts; but their unique value lies in the manner in which they exhibit the popular reactions to the events they commemorate.

The Foreign Sources of Indian History

The accounts of any country and its people by foreign observers are of great interest to the historian of the country. For they enable him to know what impression it made upon the minds of such observers and to estimate with greater confidence the part played by it in the general history of the world. And where, as in the case of Ancient India, the native sources of history fail him partly or altogether at some points, the writings of foreigners gain great value in his eyes. Yet it is easy to exaggerate the value of the Greek writings on India. The Greek writers did evince a commendable interest in observing and recording facts. But they were also credulous purveyors of all the fable and gossip that came their way. The few who wrote before the invasion of Alexander did so mostly from hearsay and had little direct knowledge of India. The scientists and men of action who accompanied Alexander must have found most of their time taken up with planning, marching and fighting in a hostile and unknown country and the wonder is that they succeeded in doing what they did to make India known to their countrymen; and the lands they traversed were but the fringe of Hindustan far from the genuine centres of Hindu culture in the heart of the country. The ambassadors of the Hellenistic kings who came after Alexander, in particular Magasthenes, had better opportunities of studying the country and its people as their missions took them into their midst. But being ignorant of the language of the people, they must have depended on intepreters of sorts and experienced considerable difficulty in comprehending correctly what they saw and heard. The Chinese pilgrims of a later age who had command of the Sanskrit idiom were much better placed in this respect, but their interests were not so wide. Lastly, with very few exceptions, Herodotus being the most notable of them, all the original writings have perished and we now depend on excerpts preserved

by later writers and compilers, who, in turn, had access only at second hand to the matter they quoted. We lack the means of forming an independent integral judgement of most of our ultimate authorities. Nevertheless it is useful to study these excerpts with care, for much can be learnt thus of the geography, physical and human, of India as it was understood by contemporary Greek writers, of its fauna and flora, of its society, religious conditions and economic activity.

Scylax : The first Greek to write a book on India was the sea captain Scylax of Caryanda whom Darius sent out in 509 B.C. on a voyage of exploration to find out where the Indus emptied itself into the sea. He is said to have started from the city of Kaspatyrus in the Paktyikan district, sailed down the stream to the sea and after a voyage of 30 months, reached the place whence the Egyptian king Necho sent the Phoenicians to sail round Libya. We know little of Scylax's book ; we do not hear of it as being a guide to Alexander in his voyage. It is certain however that Scylax started some of the fables about Indian peoples which coloured Greek traditional beliefs about India for many centuries. Aristotle cites Scylax's statement that in India kings had a marked superiority over those they governed.

Herodotus : The references to India and Indians in Herodotus place them in a clear light, and the monstrous races that formed the stock in trade of Greek writers on India before and after him do not make their appearance in his pages. India is to him the furthest region of the inhabited world towards the east, and the Indians dwell nearest the region of the rising Sun. Of the Indians within the empire of Darius he observed that they were more numerous than any other nation known to him, and paid a tribute exceeding that of every other people, 360 talents of gold dust. But he knows that there were many other tribes of Indians, all of them dark skinned, living a long way from Persia towards the south over whom King Darius had no authority. There were many tribes among Indians and they did not all speak the same language. Herodotus's knowledge of the people across the Persian border was by no means confined to savages. There is a very good account of the life of the forest dwelling sages of India who used wild rice for their staple food. Herodotus notes that the beasts and birds of India were much bigger than those found elsewhere, except the horses, which were surpassed by the Median

breed. The Indus was for him the only river, besides the Nile, that produced crocodiles. Most interesting to the Greeks must have been his discovery that there were trees in India the fruit whereof is a wool exceeding in beauty and goodness that of sheep.

In truth the period between Herodotus and Alexander is marked by a decided set back in the Greek knowledge of India. The Persians lost their Indian Satrapy after some time and Alexander did not come across Persian officials east of the Hindu-kush. Even Herodotus was not perhaps much read and there is no evidence that Alexander knew of his account of Scylax's voyage. But the expedition of Alexander was the first occasion when the West began to hear a good deal about India that was based on direct personal observations of the reporters. Though in his wars and campaigns the first place was given to military considerations other interests of a wider character were by no means forgotten, and among his lieutenants and companions there were many scientists and literary men who later employed their pens in describing what they had seen and heard wherever they went no less than in celebrating the martial successes of Alexander. They were the first to communicate to the outside world a more or less accurate knowledge of India, its physical features and products, its inhabitants and their social and political institutions. Three or four writers stand out among the contemporaries of Alexander because of the frequent references made to them by later writers. First is Nearchus. Then come Onesicritus and Kleitarchus.

Subsequent to the above writers came the ambassadors from the Hellenistic kingdoms to the Mauryan court, whose observations on India were based on a wider and somewhat closer knowledge of the country. Among them the most celebrated was, of course, Megasthenes. He marks the culmination of the knowledge which ancient Europe ever had of India. Writers who came after Megasthenes improved their knowledge of India's geography but their account of Indian civilization was accurate only in the measure in which they followed Megasthenes.

Megasthenes lived for sometime with Sybyrtius, the Satrap of Arachosia, and from there Seleucus sent him out as ambassador to the Court of Chandragupta often; this was of course after the conclusion of the treaty of alliance between Chandragupta and

Seleucus. Megasthenes evidently knew Kabul and the Punjab very well and travelled along the Royal Road from the frontier to the capital of the Mauryan Empire. For his knowledge of the rest of India, he depended upon report. He wrote the *Indika,* a comprehensive work on India, apparently divided into four books describing the country, its soil, climate, animals and plants, its government and religion, the manner of the people and their arts. He sought to describe many things from the King's court down to the remotest tribes. Many writers copied him assiduously in later times even as they cast aspersions on his veracity as did Eratosthenes and Strabo.

Of the education and training of Megasthenes we know little. We may guess that he was an administrator and diplomat with a sober vision that sought to penetrate behind appearances and give a faithful report to his monarch of the strength and weakness of the neighbouring empire on the east. We do not know if he wrote out his work when he was in India or after his return to the West. In any event his statements on the Indian State, Law and Administration must be interpreted with care in the light of his natural prepossessions as an official of a large Hellenistic state, and it is probable that some of them included an argument, criticism or correction due to what other Greek writers before him had stated on particular topics. Megasthenes has often been denounced as untrustworthy both by ancient and modern writers, but this charge applies, properly speaking, only to what he writes from hearsay, particularly on the fabulous races of India and on Herakles and the Indian Dionysus. Of the former the learned Brahmins of the country had a great deal to tell him, but he says that he did not set down everything he heard, which may be readily accepted in the light of the puranic accounts of such races. Quite probably he fell into some errors, but as we can be certain in no instance that we have his very words before us, it is always doubtful if the mistake was made by Megasthenes himself or those who copied him. Of the manner in which the *Indika* of Megasthenes was used by these authors, Schwanbeck remarks : 'since Strabo. Arrianus and Diodorus have directed their attention to relate nearly the same things, it has resulted that the greatest part of the *Indika* has been completely lost and that of many passages, singularly enough, three epitomes are extant, to which occasionally a fourth is added by Plinius.'

Special importance must be attached to the classical writers who have elucidated the geography and natural History of India. Pliny the Elder is the earliest in this line. He wrote a cyclopaedic 'Natural History' in 37 books. The sixth book contains his geography of India, based mainly on the *Indika* of Megasthenes.

Next to Pliny comes the anonymous author of the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, written a few years later after the publication of Pliny's work. He was a Greek, settled in Egypt, who made a voyage to the Indian coast about 80 A.D. and left a record of its ports, harbours and merchandise. This short work has preserved from oblivion a phase of the trade and maritime activity in Ancient India of which he hear also the in earliest literature of the Tamils. Ptolemy represents a further stage in that increasing acquaintance of theRomans with the countries ot the East; he wrote a geographical account of India in the 2nd century A.D. on scientific lines. He drew his data from secondary sources and has fallen into numerous errors. His general conception of the shape of India is also faulty in the extreme.

After Ptolemy's attempt 'to put into scientific form the records and personal impressions of a number of merchants, travellers and others of his time', 'there followed a long period without original observation or authorship, a period of copying, compilation and imitation.' The Roman Empire began to develop signs of weakness, and the delicate commercial system which had been reared during the Hellenistic and early periods broke down completely towards the end of 3rd century A.D. The Greek half of the Roman Empire indeed kept up its political unity much longer than the Western half. To this period belongs Marcian of Heraclea whose work has survived only in fragments. 'If it had been preserved to us in complete form,' says Schoff, 'it might indeed have been a more useful compilation of Roman geography for general reference than the highly technical work of Ptolemy.'

A more typical Byzantine figure was the crotchety monk, 'Cosmas' called *Indikopleustes*, the man who sailed to India. In his early life he was a merchant and his business took him to many places on the Persian Gulf, on the west coast of India and as far east as Ceylon. His book '*Christian Topography*,' written some time between 530 and 550 A.D. sets out to disprove the theories of

classical geography on the configuration of the earth and establish doctrines drawn from Holy Scriptures. Yule characterised it, not very unjustly, as 'a Continent of mud from which we may extract, however, a few geographical fossils of considerable interest.'

The Chinese Writers : The writings of the Chinese travellers form a valuable supplement to the classical accounts of Greek and Roman writers. Three of the Chinese travellers, Fa-Hien, Hiuen-Tsang and I-tsing are better known than the rest and have recorded their experience in books which are fortunately preserved in their original forms and have all been translated into English and French by Legge, Beal, Takakusu and Chavannes. From 3rd century to 8th century, these travellers visited India and have left their impressions about the social and economic condition of India prevailing during their time. Fa-Hien came in the time of Chandragupta Vikramaditya ; Hiuen-Tsang during the time of Harshavardhana ; I-tsing during the latter part of the 7th century A.D. All these three writers spent a considerable time in India and learnt its language and culture with great interest and enthusiasm. The first two travellers, especially Hiuen-Tsang, travelled widely almost all over the country. In these respects, the Chinese travellers possessed an undoubted advantage over the Greeks and the Romans. The Greek travellers came, saw and remained for sometime only in Pataliputra. But the Chinese travellers visited not only the country of Magadha but even the extreme parts of South India. But these Chinese travellers visited India not to write the history of India but with a religious purpose. They were all devout Buddhist monks whose journey to India was merely a pilgrimage to holy lands and whose aim was mainly to study the condition of Buddhism in India and to collect Buddhist relics and scriptures. It is this aspect of Chinese travellers that somewhat detracts from the historical value of their writings. Beyond the state of Buddhism, they never bothered about secular matters and often do not even mention the names of the rulers of the countries they visited. But Hiuen-Tsang is not so circumscribed and gives some interesting information about his patron Harshavardhana and other contemporary rulers of India. He vividly describes the later life of Harshavardhana, his court, his attitude towards Buddhism and the system of education that was current in India during his time. He himself spent a few years in the University of Nalanda

and devoted a chapter to the general educational system of India in general and Nalanda in particular.

The third great traveller I-tsing visited India about 675 A.D. and remained in India for some time. One of his accounts is mostly interesting in so far it describes the condition of Buddhism in India and another gives the biographies of 60 monks who visited India. He left India by way of Java and returned to China ultimately in 695 A.D. His accounts were finished in 693 A.D. Thus the writings of Chinese travellers have rendered valuable contributions to our knowledge of the state of Buddhism in India. But we must be on our guard against accepting as literally true all their statements, especially those which concern the Buddhist faith, even when based on personal observation. Their judgements on Indian people were warped by an implicit faith in the superiority of Buddhism and the intimate association with the men and monks and the institutions connected with that religion. Their concern was to depict the state of Buddhism in the various parts of the Buddhist world and other matters take a subordinate place in their accounts.

Arab Writers

With the ninth century we enter on the period of the great Arab travellers, geographers and historians. From very ancient times much of the trade of the Indian Ocean had been in the hands of the Arabs, and with the rise of Islam there came a sudden expansion which was not confined to religion and politics, but spread to commerce and science. The Prophet had been himself a merchant in his early life, and this no doubt explains in part the great prestige which Muslim merchants enjoyed. The dramatic story of the expansion of Muslim power under the early Khalifs is well known ; one would expect that the political revolutions which accompanied it would have been hindrances to trade. But even in the midst of the most rapid and surprising conquests, commercial expansion went on apace. In the 16th year of the Hegira (637 A.D.), in the Caliphate of Omar, a fleet started from the coast of Oman to ravage Sindh and the West Coast of India. And before the end of the seventh century, a colony of Muslim merchants had established themselves in Ceylon. Some Muslim women who had lost their parents in Ceylon were carried off by Indian pirates on their way back home, and this event furnished a pretext to the famous Hajjaj to invade

the Indus Valley. In 758 A.D. the Arabs and Persians settled in Canton were sufficiently numerous for them to be able to raise tumult in the city and turn to their own profit the confusion thus created. In fact politically the Arab empire was not stable and 'it split up into various elements almost as quickly as it had been constructed. But as an economic and cultural power it remained of the greatest significance. It created for a time the conditions under which a revival both of prosperity and of learning was possible. The actual contribution of Arab scholars and of Arab artists is not so important as the work they enabled others to do. The empire was not so much Arab as Muslim, not a racial but a religious unity. "Out of some sixteen geographers of note" (who wrote in Arabic), we are told by a modern historian, "from the ninth to the thirteenth century, four were natives of Persia, four of Baghdad, and four of Spain."' *

Ibn Khurdadbeh

Abul-Kasim-Obeidulla-bin-Ahmad was among the earliest of these writers. He is better known as Ibn Khurdadbeh, his Persian surname indicating that he was a descendant of a Magian, Khordadbeh by name. The latter embraced Islam like many of his co-religionists, and his grandson rose to a high position in the official world, and he was in a position to gather much authentic information on the various parts of the empire and the countries with which it maintained relations of one kind or another. His *Book of Routes and Kingdoms* was composed between 844 and 848 A.D., but was still being modified in 885 A.D. Unfortunately, as Masudi remarks, he presents his facts in a dry and incomplete manner, and if he enters into details occasionally, it is only to refer to some quixotic legend. Yet, there is one precious passage describing the state of intercommunication between Europe and Asia in the second half of the ninth century :

'The Jewish merchants speak Persian, Roman (Greek and Latin), Arabic, and the French, Spanish and Slav languages. They travel from the West to the East, and from the East to the West, now by land now by sea. They take from the West eunuchs, female slaves, boys, silk, furs and swords. They embark in the country of the Franks on the Western sea and sail to Farama ; there they put their merchandise on the backs of animals and

* Oakeshott : *Commerce and Society*, A Short History of Trade and its effect on Civilization. p. 48-9.

go by land marching for five days to Colzom, at a distance of twenty parasangs. Then they embark on the Eastern sea (Red Sea) and go from Colzom to Hedjaz and Jidda; and then to Sindh, India and China. On their return they bring musk, aloes, camphor, cinnamon and other products of the eastern countries, and return Colzom, and then to Farama where they take ship again on the Western sea, some going to Cons tantinople to sell their goods, and others to the country of the Franks.

'Sometimes the Jewish merchants, in embarking on the Western sea, sail (to the mouth of the Oronte) towards Antioch. At the end of a three days' march (from there), they reach the banks of the Euphrates and come to Baghdad. There they embark on the Tigris and descend to Obollah, whence they set sail to Oman, Sindh, India and China. The voyage is thus made without interruption.'*

Abu Zaid Hassan, of Siraf on the Persian Gulf, though no great traveller himself, had immense opportunities of meeting much travelled merchants and scholars, the celebrated Masudi among them. Siraf was then a busy port frequented by merchants from all parts of the world, and Abu Zaid declares that his object was to supplement an earlier work on India and China by adding to it data drawn from his own studies and his talks with persons who had travelled in the eastern countries.

Abu Zaid's predecessor who wrote his work in 851 A.D. has often been called Suleiman; but the evidence does not warrant anything more than the cautious conclusion of Yule, re-stated by Pelliot, that the work edited by Abu Zaid is a compilation of notes made by an anonymous writer 'from his own experiences in at least two voyages he made to India at an interval of sixteen years and from what he had collected from others who had visited China, Suleiman among them'.† 'It is clear,' says Yule, 'from the vagueness of his accounts that the author's knowledge of India was slight and inaccurate, and that he had no distinct conception of its magnitude.' However that may be, he was largely drawn upon by Masudi who had travelled in India and Ceylon and wanted to devote particular attention to India. Ibn Al-Fakih (902), another writer of the early tenth century, who preceded

* Journal Asiatique 6 ; 5 (1865) pp. 512-14.

† Yule. *Cathay*, i. p. 126.

Abu Zaid and Masudi, also drew largely upon this anonymous writer whom Abu Zaid considered worthy of being edited more than half a century after the date of the original composition. In fact it is a common trait of Arab writers to copy one another extensively and it would be otiose to reproduce all their accounts.

Abu Zaid adds many interesting particulars to the notes of his predecessors. The accuracy of his information is established by the remarkably correct account he gives of the political revolution that caused confusion in China soon after Suleiman's visit or visits to that country and had entirely stopped the Arab trade with China at the time he wrote his work.

There are many other Arab writers, travellers and geographers, of the tenth century,* besides those so far mentioned. But their works have little on Southern India or at least little that is new except exaggerated and apocryphal accounts like that of the temple of Mankir (Malkhed) from the pen of Abu'l-Faradj (988). The illustrious Al-Biruni (c.1030) took the whole range of human sciences for his sphere ; philosophy, mathematics, chronology, medicine, nothing escaped his attention ; he knew Sanskrit very well and appears to have read even Greek works in the original. He spent many years in India, was the friend of Mahmud of Ghazni and his son Masud, and in correspondence with Avicenna. He died at Ghazni in 1048. His great work on India is an excellent account of Indian religion, philosophy, literature, chronology, astronomy, customs, law and astrology. His interesting fable on Kikhind attests the hold of the Rama legends on the minds of the people and the attention paid to it by Al-Biruni himself.

The great geographer Edrisi, whose work was written under the patronage of Roger II of Sicily and completed in 1153-4, depended exclusively on the writings of his predecessors like Ibn-Khurdadbeh and Ibn-Hawkal for what he said on India. Yule† has characterised his account of south-eastern Asia, including India, as very merge confused. 'Professing to give the distances between places,' continues Yule, 'he generally under-estimates these enormously, in so much that in a map compiled from his

* Ibn Rosteh (903), Abu Dulaf Mis'ar Mulhallil (940), Ishtakri (951) and Ibn Hawkal (976) are among them.

† *Cathay* i. p. 141. Extract relating to India may be read conveniently in Elliot and Dowson i. pp. 75-93.

distances Asia would, I apprehend, assume very contracted dimensions.'

Archaeology

Archaeology easily falls into two broad divisions—pre-historic and historical. With regard to pre-historic archaeology though we have been quite lucky in recent decades in the Mohenjo Daro and Harappa finds, and in the results of the superficial archaeological survey conducted in the area of the Indus Valley Culture, still there are two respects in which our pre-historic archaeology differs from that of other countries. The first is the relative paucity of finds of a striking character. We have had nothing nearly so sensational for instance, as the finds from Ur of the Chaldees, or the finds from Tutankhamon's tomb, or those of Schliemann in Troy or of Sir Arthur Evans in Crete. It has to be admitted that our finds have been less spectacular though not the less interesting or instructive on that account. We have not had the advantage of a natural advertisement that results from the finds of golden cups, chalices, jewels, coffins and so on, all beautifully wrought and high works of art of a very ancient culture.

Another respect in which our pre-historic archaeology differs from that of other countries is that our studies have been proceeding by fits and starts and there has been no systematic attempt at exploring the pre-historic archaeology of even a definite area. The one exception is the surface exploration in the area of the Indus Valley Culture in Afghanistan, Baluchistan and Southern Iran made by the officers of the Archaeological Department, particularly Stein and N.G. Majumdar. But systematic excavation has been conducted over only a relatively small area of this rich and extensive field. Even in such known sites elsewhere as Adiccanallur no attempt has been made to pursue the work begun many years ago. Round about Madras there are very interesting data that are among the earliest relics of human habitation but they have been only little studied, and by a few scholars generally in their moments of leisure snatched from a busy administrative life. And pre-historic archaeology systematically pursued may produce very good results as has been seen in recent years when the archaeological department has given some attention to the study. Some of the South Indian sites like Maski (Hyderabad) and Chandravalli as also some of the numerous sites in the Vellar basin of the 'Pudukkottai

State,' are very interesting as they bridge the transition from pre-history to historical times in a remarkable manner. Since the formation of Pakistan took away the sites of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa from India, our Archaeological department has been making commendable and fairly successful efforts to trace the spread of the Indus Valley Culture in India and marked out many sites for study, though the excavations undertaken so far have not given striking results, except possibly at Rupar.

The study of Ceramics and the classification and comparison of beads according to the form and material of their make are of great importance for the study of the pre-historic maritime contacts of South India, which seem to have survived far into historical times. These studies are still in their infancy and few Indian scholars are known to have taken to them seriously. The work now being carried on in Java, Malaya, Indo-China and the Philippines in this field has much interest for us. Prof. Beyer's work in the Philippines, for instance, has led him to the inference that the Hindu colonisation of the Eastern lands from South India in the early centuries of the Christian era was not the beginning of such contacts, but only the continuation of a trade relation that started far back in the first millennium B.C.

Attention may be drawn to some curious analogies between practices which prevail to-day in our midst and practices which Wolley thinks prevailed in Ur about 3000 B.C. Again decisively South Indian features of culture are found to have spread far in the East. In fact there are many repetitions of these features in Java, Indo-China, and even part of Eastern China, so much so that the French scholar Parmentier was tempted to adumbrate a theory of a common origin of temple architecture for the whole of Southern Asia from Arabia right up to China. And others are inclined to suggest the spread of a pre-historic Dravidian culture to the Mediterranean.

If we turn to the archaeology of historical times, here again though one is quite conscious of the difficulties under which Indian archaeology has had to labour, particularly due to paucity of funds and men, and the vastness of the area involved, still one cannot but regret that, while in the beginning of the 20th century the Indian Archaeological Department was the envy of other lands like the Dutch East Indies and Indo-China, the subsequent history of Archaeology has tended to throw India more and more

into the shade. In Java and Indo-China, striking work has been done which will serve as a model for much that may be done if we had men and resources here. If you look at the pictures of many a Javanese monument before archaeological restoration and after it, you will be struck by the great care and thoroughness with which the work has been carried out, and also by the very great ingenuity of it all. Of course, there is no comparison between the problems of a small island like Java and those of a vast sub-continent like India. But still with regard to methods of work, there is, it seems much to learn. It must be mentioned, however, that one school of archaeologists followed by the Indian department are opposed to all restoration ('anastylose' as the French school of Hanoi calls it) but are keen only on conservation.

South Indian Archaeology, in particular, has formed the study of only one separate monograph—Prof. Dubreuil's brilliant work *Archaeologie du sud de l'Inde* (2 Vols. Musee Guimet, Paris). That was an excellent beginning, there is much that remains to be done by way of amplifying and completing that brilliant sketch of South Indian Archaeology. The South Indian temple must be put at the centre of these archaeological studies and we shall need many monographs, each specifically devoted to one celebrated temple. Here again the Dutch Archaeological Department of Java furnishes the model. Now these separate monographs on different temples will have to be written and written with care and discernment before we can attempt the general study of the rise and growth of the temple, and its place as a religious and social institution in South India.

We have had very superficial and sketchy attempts to derive the Sikhara from the Stupa or to derive the temple from funerary monuments. There may be truth in these suggestions, but they are not more than mere suggestions at the moment, because no attempt has been made at a critical and systematic study of the data available. The relations between the King's palace and the God's temple in South India again is another topic which will have to be studied in some detail with equal caution and judgement.

Archaeological monuments may be classified in different ways, and each method has its own advantages. And our knowledge is not yet sufficiently precise to enable us to adhere always to any one mode. Sometimes you will find monuments classified by the

dynasties ; we hear often of the Hoysala type, the Chalukya type or the Pallava type ; also by locality—the South Indian style or the North Indian style. These are very vague designations not quite clearly defined or critically studied. Monuments are also grouped by their dates ; ancient, medieval, and modern are very broad divisions. There is also a theoretical classification known to books on Indian architecture such as Nagara, Vesara and Dravida. But a little attempt to use these terms in relation to known monuments will show very striking differences between theory and practice. It is not often possible to carry out any regular classification of known temples from the theoretical grouping of our Agamas. And no standard line of treatment of South Indian monuments has yet been evolved. Hints towards such a treatment will be found in the pages of Dubreuil's book mentioned above which unfortunately has been translated into English only in parts. One chapter of the first part has been translated under the title 'Dravidian Architecture,' and the second part has appeared in an English version under the title '*Iconography of Southern India*.'

Archaeological evidence has sometimes a very great value in deciding problems of affinity and spread of cultural influences. Take Amaravati Buddhist Art for instance. That is a very well-known school of Art with unmistakable characteristics of its own. But these characteristics, or some of them, it shares with Gandharan art, though there are also some striking differences between the two. And the real explanation of these common characteristics lies in the operation of similar influences of foreign origin upon Indian art in these areas. Gandhara was exposed to Greco-Roman influences across Persia and Bactria in the post-Alexandrian period. Likewise the east coast of South India was exposed to Greco-Roman influence by the channels of maritime trade along the Red Sea, the Arabian sea and round Cape Comorin. To seek to belittle these influences is as much a mistake as to exaggerate their importance. And the data are not wanting for a very proper and accurate assessment of the extent of this foreign influence in the South and in the East.

Again one of the earliest Buddha images found in Sumatra, a large stone image more than life size, distinctly belongs to the Amaravati School. The history of this image is a very fine chapter in the achievement of Dutch archaeological service in the East.

Indies. In a hillock called Bukit Seguntang near Palembang some parts of this image were dug out several years ago. More recently a further excavation resulted in the discovery of other parts of it, and by patiently piecing them together, Perkin, an archaeological engineer, succeeded in reconstructing the body of the image, but the head was still missing ; and only about 1937-8 it struck a scholar, Schnitger, that one of the heads with which he was very familiar at the Batavia Museum for over thirty years might belong to the image, and this turned out correct. There are other instances like this. Now this image stands in Sumatra. The striking similarity of this image with some of the images of Gandharan art is so great that at one time Sumatran and Javanese papers began discussing actively how this Greco-Roman influence got to Sumatra, and the explanation was sought in popular stories current in Sumatra that Alexander had actually invaded Sumatra, and some, more scientifically minded were inclined to maintain that, if it was not Alexander, it was some commander of his that must have sailed across the Indian Ocean. The truth however seems to be that either that image was brought in Sumatra by Hindu settlers from the Telugu country or what, considering the material, is even more probable, because the stone out of which the image is made is not found in Sumatra, it was imported from somewhere near Amaravati ; it must be a very early image indeed because the hey day of Amaravati Art comes to an end by the 3rd or 4th century A.D. at the latest. And if you want additional confirmation of this view you do not lack it. Because there is a bronze image of the Buddha found in the Celebes some time in 1921-22 which has been discussed at great length by the former head of the archaeological service in Batavia, Dr. Bosch, and demonstrated to be definitely of the Amaravati School. A somewhat later bronze image from Tapoenelli in Sumatra of a women which bears striking similarity to one of the sculptured women in the Nageswara temple at Kumbakonam (early Chola art) shows the continuity of Indonesia's contact with the Tamil country. Now these bits of evidence from sculpture and the striking similarities we are able to trace between the art of these regions separated by the sea, are a very welcome confirmation of what we may otherwise vaguely guess from the presence of inscriptions and such other evidence of the early penetration of South Indian Influences into these Eastern Islands. In fact this is a very interesting subject, the spread of

South Indian Influence in the East, and deserves to be studied in detail. We do not mean that there was no North Indian Influence but South Indian influences were earlier, and they were stronger and more continuous. North Indian influences come in rather late and are not quite so steady, and that is quite intelligible. After all South India is nearer these lands. The Pallava and early Chola temples of South India are clearly reproduced among the early Chandis of Java, and the later Chola monuments like our big temples of Tanjore and Gangaikonda-Cholapuram are parallelled and excelled in the art of Angkor Vat in Cambodia. In fact the architectural development of South India and of the Eastern colonies may be said to have a parallel history which has not yet been worked out in such detail as it deserves to be.

If you turn to South Indian Sculpture in particular, you will find that there are few portraits of persons ; there are some Pallava portrait sculptures with names inscribed above the figures, especially at Mamallapuram. There are some Chola stone sculptures and bronzes which are not quite portraits perhaps, but not quite icons either. And there are late sculptures of a quasi-portrait character, coming from the Vijayanagara days, and from those of the Nayaks and their families, which you find in the different temples of South India renovated by these Nayaks. There are old images here and there popularly described to be this person or that ; for instance, one very huge stone image is called Kamban, it is not known with what reason, in Srirangam ; but of the authenticity of such namings one cannot be too critical. On the whole for a country which made such an advance in the art of sculpture, the number of portrait images is not so many as one would expect. Of course one should not forget such examples as are found in the Tirupati temple of the images of Krishnadevaraya and his queens and of Venkatapati Devaraya or a fairly curious image in the Nandi temple which is there called Chola pratima by the local people.

But the growth of sculpture is illustrated more by icons, images of gods and goddesses in stone and metal, meant for worship and sometimes for ornament also. These images, it seems, have more life and realism, and are less overlaid with symbolism and convention in the early stages of South Indian Art than in the later. The line may be drawn some where about 1100 or so. The later

images show a tendency to become stiffer, more and more the products of an orthodox adherence to text book rules. There is less freedom for the artist, less inventiveness coming into play, and an increasing rigidity in the form and expression. This is perhaps true of almost any Fine Art, at least in India, that it starts very well and attains some freedom ; then technical treatises begin to grow ; the growth of the treatises from the old and the good works of art seems to be a good feature, but it is the presence of these treatises that begins to do harm to the art at a later stage. One is reminded of William James's remark that the greatest enemy of a subject is its Professor.

We must not forget that there are fine sculptural panels, large groupings of figures, very cleverly done, sometimes under very strikingly simple but effective conventions, which adorn the walls of our numerous temples. The sculptors of the Buddhist monuments at Amaravati, Barabudur in Java etc., found their themes in the Jataka stories of the past lives of the Buddha. Buddhist sculptures are not altogether absent even from South Indian Hindu temples. The Tanjore temple contains sculptures of the Buddha in the process of the attaining of wisdom and of the worship of the tree of knowledge. But more common in Hindu temples are scenes from the epics and the Bhagavata, *Periyapuranam* and other edifying works. The cosmic significance of Bhagiratha's penance is strikingly brought out in sculpture on an extensive rock face in Mahabalipuram (Mamallapuram). Some Chola monuments like the temples at Tiruvalur and Tribhuvanam proclaim their characteristic Chola nature by the carving on stone of the story of Manu executing justice on his son, the son being thrown under the wheels of a chariot because he accidentally caused the death of a calf in that manner. A beautiful little temple at Amritapura in Mysore contains a large number of sculptured scenes on a small scale from the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Bhagavata*. There is again that singular freak, very interesting in its result, of a rebellious chieftan of South Arcot who put up in the Chidambaram temple sculptured pannels of all the poses and dances described in a celebrated chapter in Bharata's *Natyasastra* with the corresponding verse inscribed underneath each pose. But besides these we have a number of dancing images sculptured and sometimes painted, for painting seems also to have been quite common though naturally little of it has survived, of single dancers and

dancers in pairs and groups, forming regular friezes on the basements of temples, from which we can derive a fair knowledge of the dress, the ornaments worn, musical instruments employed and so on. Fortunately most of these archaeological data can be put to good use on account of the fact that these temples proclaim their history by the inscriptions on their walls. The amount of dated material for the study of the social life of South India has not yet been adequately realised or exploited.

Epigraphy

We may now pass to the most important class of archaeological evidence that the student of Indian History has to deal with, Epigraphy. The number of scripts in which South Indian Inscriptions are written in somewhat staggering, and for any one to work in the field of South Indian epigraphy, a good familiarity with all these scripts is absolutely essential. They are: the Brahmi to start with, Vengi-Pallava, a little later, Telugu-Kannada, Tamil-grantha, Malayalam and Vatte-luttu and Kole-luttu, and Nandi-Nagari not to speak of such passing freaks of the company's days as Hinduvi and of Modi. In addition to this variety of scripts we must remember that the number of records is also very large, nearly thirty to forty thousand or more of them. Epigraphia Carnatica and the Mysore reports account for another 10 or 11 thousands, and there are inscriptions published from Travancore and Pudukkotai and other inscriptions still being discovered. Several hundreds of inscriptions are discovered annually, at least one per day on the average. That is the material with which we have got to deal. And aids to the study of these inscriptions are not far to seek. Burnell wrote a brilliant sketch of 'South Indian Palaeography' (1878) more than three quarters of a century ago; then there is Buhler's classic treatise on *Indian Palaeography*, translated into English (from German) by Fleet in the Indian Antiquary (Vol. 33). But after that the only notable attempt at elucidating South Indian epigraphy was that of the late Gopinath Rao in the Travancore Archaeological Series, till Mr. T. N. Subramanyam produced a book in Tamil on the same subject, a work based upon much epigraphical material inaccessible to the earlier writers on South Indian epigraphy; and C. Sivaram Murti's recent book (Madras Museum publication) is also noteworthy.

There is, however, a great lack of adequate bibliographical

work. It takes quite a lot of time and trouble for the beginner to know where a thing is to be found ; of course, it is true that bibliographies can be used successfully only when you have gained a certain acquaintance with your subject ; but then, you soon reach a stage when you miss very much the invaluable help you could derive from well arranged bibliographies and indexes, for tracking your subject through a mass of material accumulated by several decades of exploration and research. Taking the 28 volumes of the Epigraphica Indica, the half century and more of the Epigraphy reports of Madras, and those of Mysore and Travancore and Hyderabad, there was till recently no publication which provided an index to these or classified the materials they contain. The only thing we had in that line was Rangachari's *Topographical list* and that stops with 1915. Since 1915 there has been a most active campaign for collecting epigraphs which has been very fruitful indeed. Kielhorn's list of Southern Inscriptions, still very useful so far as it goes is now rather antiquated and deserves to be brought up to date. Sewell's *Historical Inscriptions of Southern India*, again useful in its way because it gives a minimum of fairly well-ordered references on each important occurrence, is yet no substitute for a complete hand-book such as a revised edition of Kielhorn's list would make. Mention must be made of Dr. D.R. Bhandarkar's *List of N. Indian Brahmi inscriptions*—a very handy aid for the period it covers. There is also Luder's *List of early Brahmi records* and now the two Indexes, Topographical and Subject to the Annual Reports on S. Indian epigraphy. But above all, the publication of texts must be speeded up. After the first three volumes of the South Indian Inscriptions excellently edited by Hultzsch, Venkayya, and Krishnasastry, we have been treated to most unhandy volumes that fail to give any assistance to the student and make his task unduly tedious. Volumes VII and VIII are a little better and the further volumes are a further improvement on these as they contain brief English introductions to inscriptions and indexes of an analytical nature.

To the earliest period belong the Brahmi Inscriptions found in uninhabited and neglected caves in Ceylon and South India. These have not all been completely elucidated, but it is very probable that they represent settlements of Jain or Buddhist monks in different places. Tentative attempts to treat the language of

these inscritpions from South India as Tamil written in Brahmi have not proved altogether convincing. Asoka's inscriptions are found in two or three places, one set of the minor rock edicts in and near Siddhapura, Mysore, and the 14 Rock Edicts a copy of the minor Rock Edict in the region of Erragudi and Gooty and a copy of the Minor Rock Edict discovered near Cuddapah in 1954, marking the limit of Asoka's Empire in the South. The records found in Maski and elsewhere in Hyderabad are also well known. The long and regular series of inscriptions belonging to different dynasties cannot be dealt with in any detail here. But a few instances of some of the very crucial inscriptions which furnish definite evidence of very interesting cultural contacts may be noted. Take the Yupa Inscriptions of Mulavarman of Borneo. Here in what is, at the moment, a distant non-Hindu country, you have a number of stone inscriptions—seven of them, written in early Pallava script of the close of the 4th or early 5th century A.D. They show that a king Mulavarman by name, performed Vedic sacrifices, made *go-danas* and gave *dakshinas* to Brahmins, surely a very interesting set of records. These inscriptions bear an unmistakable testimony to the early spread of South Indian colonies in the east, and they do not stand alone. There is another record in Champa, in Indo-China, known as the Vocanh record. It is about half a century or so earlier than the Yupa Inscriptions; and there are inscriptions from Western Java in the same script in a somewhat later form commemorating the rule of Purnavarman of Taruma. Now all these records are very near in point of time to the Yupa Inscriptions. And this evidence we have to take into account along with other archaeological evidence sculptures. They all fit in very well with one another. Some time later we have a Tamil inscription from Takua-Pa ; we have reason to think that the inscription definitely belongs to the 9th century. It says that there were a Vishnu temple and a tank and a set of people appointed for the special protection of these, and it also contains the name Avani Narayana celebrated in Pallava history as a surname of Nandi Varman III. It also mentions the *manigramam*, a mercantile association, and the script is Tamil characteristic of the 9th century. In another fragment, also in Tamil, from Sumatra is mentioned another mercantile association *Tisai-Ayirattu-Ainnurruvar*, and it is dated in Saka 1010. In all these ways you find that epigraphy is able to furnish most definite

and conclusive evidence of very interesting cultural contacts. In this sense epigraphy is the most important source of Indian history.

Epigraphical evidence, however, is not always as definite or as conclusive as one would wish. Conflicting evidence is often quite common, especially when we compare data upon any one event drawn from inscriptions of different dynasties. We have only too many instances, when we come to political transactions in South India, of both parties in a fight claiming victory. It is the proper task of historical criticism to solve these conflicts and reach probable conclusions.

The most important class of South Indian Inscriptions is that of the stone inscriptions. Their value as evidence is much higher than that of any other class of inscriptions because of the material on which they are engraved. There are generally very few chances of these inscriptions becoming faded. You can always fix the age of an inscription from its script, and if there is one thing of which epigraphists are sure, it is the relative chronology of authentic inscriptions. It means that inscriptions which are not authentic are easily found out. The evolution of the Brahmi script through various stages, and of the other scripts, from time to time, has been traced carefully and with sufficient precision for us to be able to decide the chronology of an inscription within a century or even less of its true date. Therefore, we cannot but regret the numerous instances of the most thoughtless destruction of the stone inscriptions of South India in a large number of temple renovations. Several centuries ago a vain Pandyan Emperor was foolish enough to think that the recording of a petty little grant which he made of some lambs and sheep, to a temple was much more important than the Svarajatis of what should have been at first a sister record to the famous Kudumiyamalai musical inscription of the seventh or eighth century A.D. As a matter of fact, one cannot imagine how this happened, because the old Pallava script is in istelf a most attractive piece of ornament. In fact the ornamental character of epigraphy on stone is very pronounced in the Pallava period, and continues to be equally pronounced till late in the Chola period. If you go to Tanjore you should study the chiselling of the inscriptions on the mouldings of the tremendous basement of the Great Temple. In fact it is one of the Wonders of the World. Note also the impression which the inscriptions put upon the pillars on the peristyle of the temple make. Try to imagine these

pillars without the lettering and you will see a tiresome sameness about them. But with these letters somehow the whole group becomes more interesting ; and in out of the way places like Tiruvenkadu, and Punjai, in the Tanjore District, the stone masons have been at great pains to study the distribution of the inscriptions on the walls of the temples with a view to adorning the blank spaces on the walls of the temples in a symmetrical fashion. The stone masons of old who did this work did it with great love and as a work of art. We find even long after the establishment of an archaeological department entrusted with the care of ancient monuments, renovations of temples are allowed to take place with absolutely no regard for the epigraphical loss that is sustained in the process. We can only say that this must change and one is glad to find an increasing solicitude being shown for monuments ; but much mischief has been done already, many inscriptions have been destroyed beyond repair. Inscribed stones have been dressed to look new and all the lettering has disappeared. And the modern vandalism which is paralleled by that of at least one Pandyan King of old, stands in striking contrast to the several instances of the scrupulous care which was taken to preserve inscriptions on other occasions by mediaeval monarches. One need not detail here the actual instances known. There are at least half a dozen or more of recorded examples in which the renovator of a temple, usually a Chola or Pandyan monarch or a feudatory of his, says that the inscriptions on the old walls of the temples were at first faithfully copied in a book before the temple was demolished, and then after it was reconstructed, the inscriptions were recopied on the walls of the new temple. And this is borne out by the fact that we have a number of South Indian Inscriptions which belong to the mediaeval period by their script, but the contents of which go back to a much earlier time. But one cannot commend the process in itself or suggest its adoption to-day. For it is not very satisfactory, and students of manuscripts know how scribal error often vitiates documents and sometimes totally obscures the meaning. Considering the nature of the matter and the antiquity of the script, we cannot but suspect that something was lost, that the originals were not always read accurately, and in fact in some cases there is a frank confession, that because the old writing was in Vatteluttu, it was not possible to preserve some of the inscriptions as already no one could read the script properly.

But, after all these losses we are still lucky in being left with such great lot of inscriptions as we do now possess, for without these inscriptions South Indian History must have remained a sealed book. It may be said in passing that the stone inscriptions of the Ceded Districts, especially in their more inaccessible parts, have not yet been collected as systematically as elsewhere ; and speaking generally, the epigraphy department should make an intensive effort to push on and complete the epigraphic survey of each taluk that was undertaken with some enthusiasm some years ago, but obviously this would require a considerable strengthening of the staff in the department if the survey is to be completed in a measurable time.

The Tirumukkudal inscription of Virarajendra endowing a college and a hospital among other things, and the much later Marathi inscription of Tanjore of Sarfoji's time take rank easily among the longest stone inscriptions of the world.

We may now leave stone inscriptions and pass on to the next important class, viz., inscriptions on copper plates. Copper plates are not of course so difficult to forge as stone inscriptions are and a number of forged copper plates are known ; but here again a trained epigraphist has little difficulty in most cases in discovering the genuine from the spurious, and one has to say that, on the whole, copper plates seem to have fallen under a greater measure of suspicion than really should attach to them. One of the ablest epigraphists that worked in the field of Indian History, J.F. Fleet, was inclined to reject a great mass of the early Ganga records from Mysore as bare-faced forgeries. The authority that Fleet's word carried in the world of Indian epigraphy and history has been so great that not all the efforts of successive Directors of Archaeology in Mysore to turn the current against Fleet's opinion have completely succeeded in undoing the mischief of Fleet's original findings. But when year after year the Mysore epigraphy department succeeds in bringing to light one copper-plate after another carrying on the face of it every trace of authenticity, and these inscriptions are dated or datable in the early centuries of the Christian era, the 5th or 6th century, it becomes difficult to resist the conclusion that at least some of the plates that Fleet rejected as forgeries deserve reconsideration. In some cases he was obviously right, for instance in the case of a record dated in 169 Saka Era.

There is much genuine material in early copper plates and even in mediaeval ones. Until we come almost to the close of Vijayanagara period, copper plates are very important sources of information and very recently we have come across evidence of what one might call the archival practice in the middle ages among the Chola officials. This is a very definite datum from which we can conclude that the copper plates as well as stone records were copied out from a common original preserved in the chancery of the Palace, if one may so put it. The Kanyakumari stone inscription of Vira Rajendra has long long been known to scholars. Its Sanskrit part is a poem, almost a Kavya in itself; and, recently a copper plate of the same king has been recovered. The errors in the stone inscription are repeated in the copper plate, sure proof of a common source for both the copies; these copper plates were discovered at Charala in the Chittoor district.

Generally we know the names of composers of these *Prasastis*, but it is seldom that we have such duplicates among stone inscriptions and copper plates. Very often, especially for very early history, copper plates are either the only source or the only tolerably full source of our knowledge of historical events. Early Pandyan history and early Pallava history would have remained entirely unknown but for the presence of a fair number of authentic copper plates. The Velvikudi and Sinnamanur copper plates are almost the only source for early Pandyan history.

Our *smritis* lay down the rule that a *tamra sasana* may be made on the occasion of a grant by a king. They have not thought of any other material, and all the great South Indian monarchs were content with copper as the material on which to engrave their grants; but as the kingdoms became smaller and the kings' real power diminished, their vanity seems to have grown, and more costly material came to be used, silver plates and some times gold plates; but as the value of the writing material increased, the value of gift itself went more than proportionately lower. And in the Dutch charters relating to Nagapatam, Pulicat, Cochin, Tuticorin and other places you have often definite statements saying that copies were made on paper and silver, the former in Dutch and the latter in the Indian languages concerned. There were three parties to a treaty of Cochin in 1663. That treaty concludes with the statement that the six copies of the treaty should be written, three in Malayalam and three in Dutch, the Dutch copies on

paper, the Malayalam ones on silver *olas*, and one copy each of the Malayalam and Dutch versions would be deposited with each party. Gold was used early for small inscriptions of votive Mantras, Chakrams etc., to be put along with relics in Buddhist *stupas*. Several early Buddhist inscriptions from Burma of about the 5th century are also found engraved on gold and in South Indian Characters. The Taxila silver scroll is another case of a more precious metal than copper being employed in early times. That again comes from a *stupa*. Recently two silver plates relating to Negapatam, one in Telugu by the last Nayaka ruler of Tanjore, and the other in Tamil by the Maratha conqueror that followed were edited recently in the journal of the Batavian Society of Arts and Science (T.B.G.).

The next class of inscriptions is much shorter being inscriptions on coins and images. Inscriptions on coins are not of particularly great value in South Indian history ; but we should not forget that it was inscriptions on coins that at the beginning of the modern study of Indian history yielded a clue to Indian Palaeography at the hands of James Prinsep, the mint-master of Calcutta in the middle of 19th Century. Prinsep came across digraphic inscriptions on coins, one and the same inscription being given in two scripts, in Greek and Brahmi, and that was how the value of Brahmi letters came first to be discovered. For the history of Indo-Greek sovereigns the evidence of inscribed coins is of inestimable value, for without these coins, the history of these monarchs would have remained unknown; inscribed coins are of considerable value also for the history of the Kushanas, the Guptas, the Western Satraps and other dynasties. But more useful and more important to the history of South Indian Art is the class of inscriptions found on our metallic images, because the palaeography of inscriptions is of very great value with regard to inscribed metal images as there is no other way available of judging the age of these images ; the inscriptions of known images in South India have not been studied as completely and as carefully as they deserve to be and without such a careful study the history of the art of bronze-casting in South India must remain imperfect.

One does not wish to create the impression that everything that is contained in inscriptions is gospel truth or must be accepted by a historian as such. There are legendary genealogies without number in inscriptions. We cannot accept them as history because

they happen to be put upon copperplates or stone. There are solemn recitations of ancient grants by Trinetra Kings. Then you have the famous formula in Telugu-Choda copper plates which thereby crystallised the legend of Karikala Chola putting out the third eye of Trinetra Pallava who refused to aid him in raising the embankment on the sides of the Kaveri to control the destructive floods of that great river. That again comes from copperplates. And sometimes these copperplates are treacherous, as they incorporate legend in a form which is intriguing indeed. There is one verse in the Tiruvalangadu plates which seems to be a perfectly clear play upon proper names, but of which the true significance was missed for several years by every one who had discussed it.

That is a verse relating to Rajaraja I. The literal meaning of it is 'Because Bhima, skilled in battle, killed with a club my name sake Rajaraja, therefore shall I go and fall upon this strong Andhra ruler Bhima by name. And saying this Rajaraja fell upon him.' From this we were led to believe that there was a Rajaraja in the Telugu country, that a Bhima had invaded his territory and killed him and that Rajaraja Chola went to avenge the death of Rajaraja, the Telugu king, who was thus disposed of by Telugu Bhima. And the search for this otherwise unknown Rajaraja went on for some years, but to no purpose. In fact the verse means only this. 'I killed him because of his name Bhima.'' Why ? For the answer you must think of the *Mahabharata* ; you must also remember that Duryodhana was also called Rajaraja. It simply means that Bhima (the Telugu king) and Rajaraja Chola were born enemies, and this idea is sought to be conveyed by a play upon the names celebrated in legend. So you cannot be too careful in dealing with such stuff.

There is much poetry and literary enjoyment in the inscriptions of South India, and no historian of the literatures of South India can afford to neglect the inscriptions ; for his work would be incomplete unless he takes into account all the numerous Kavyas that constitute an important chapter in the history of literature in each of these languages. In Kannada and Telugu the earliest literature is to be recovered exclusively from inscriptions, and even long after purely literary works come into prominence, some of the inscriptions still stand very good comparison with them. These inscriptions were written by the very men who were the makers of the literature of the country. The greatest

poets of the land were attached to courts and they were often called upon to compose these inscriptions.

Buhler wrote a celebrated essay on 'Literature in Inscriptions' and established the continuity of literary tradition in Sanskrit demonstrating the falsity of the theory of the Renaissance of Sanskrit literature which held the field till then. Similar studies can be undertaken of the literary value of the inscriptions in Tamil, Telugu and Kannada.

Numismatics

From Epigraphy, let us pass on to Numismatics. Numismatics is the science which treats of coins. Numismatics, like epigraphy, forms an important source of material for the reconstruction of ancient Indian history. In other words, it helps us to construct history and not merely to corroborate it. Many thousands of coins have come to light. Hoards have been discovered in different parts of the country. Considerable advance has been made since the days of Cunningham in the lines of the preparation of scientific catalogues of these hoards. Among notable works on the subject may be mentioned John Allan's *Catalogue of the Coins of Ancient India* (in the British Museum), London 1936 ; *Catalogue of the Coins of the Gupta Dynasties and of Sasanka, king of Gauda* (in the British Museum), London 1914 by the same author A. Cunningham's researches on *the coins of the Indo-Sythians and Later Indo-Sythians* in the *Numismatic chronicle* for the years 1888 to 1894; and also by the same author *Coins of Medieval India* (1894); E.J. Rapson's *Catalogue of the Indian coins of the Andhra Dynasty, Western Kshatrapas*, etc. (in the British Museum), London 1908 ; *Indian coins*, Strassburg (1898), by the same author ; V.A. Smith's *Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum*, Calcutta, Oxford, 1906. P. Gardner's *Catalogue of Coins in the British Museum ; Greek and Scythic kings of Bactria and India*, London 1886 ; Whitehead's *Catalogue of Coins in the Punjab Museum*, Lahore, Vol. I, Oxford—1914. In these catalogues, Allan, E.J. Rapson and V.A. Smith, have made a thorough study of the different coin-types in their brilliant introductory notes. Among other scholarly treatieses on the subject of Ancient Indian Numismatics, may be mentioned D.R. Bhandarkar's : *Lectures on Ancient Indian Numismatics* (Calcutta 1921) ; and S.K. Chakravarti's *A study of Ancient Indian Numismatics*, (1931). In the former, D.R. Bhandarkar discusses the importance, the antiquity and the history of coinage in Ancient India. Chakravarti also discusses these

problems elaborately. The punch marked coins have been systematically and thoroughly studied independently by a band of Numismatists like D.D. Kosambi, Durga Prasad, E.H.C. Walsh in the pages of the Journal of the Numismatic Supplement, Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society, Journal of the Numismatic Society of India, Bombay and other learned periodicals. South Indian Numismatics has not received as much attention and care at the hands of scholars as that of the North. Elliot's *Coins of South India* (1886) is almost the only book which aims at a systematic account of the coinage of South India. After this publication, new hoards of coins have been unearthed in Chandravalli, Arikamedu, Chitaldoorg and other places. A scientific catalogue of these new discoveries on the lines of Allan and E.J. Rapson is a great desideratum. Here we may point out the pioneer attempts of some Numismatists on this line. Robert Sewell has made an excellent study of ancient Roman Coins in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society for the year 1904 ; more recently in the *Ancient India No.* 2 for the year 1946, we have an excellent appendix which contains an up-to-date bibliography on the identified Roman Coins found in India and Ceylon. T. Desikachari's *South Indian Coins*, Codrington—*Coins of Ancient Ceylon*, Altekar—*Bayance Hoard* (1954), may also be mentioned in this connection. C. J. Brown's *The Coins of India* (1922) is the only general book on Indian Numismatic study which satisfies the needs of the general reader. The author has achieved two objects in the book (1) to describe the evolution of Indian Coinage, (2) to show its importance as a source of history or as a commentary upon political, economic and social movements. The Indian Numismatic Society (Bombay) also has been doing yeoman service by publishing new catalogues of coins.

The importance of Numismatics for the study of the political and economic condition of a country is too obvious to need elaboration. Here we shall cite only a few instances. Let us take political history first. For the history of some early foreign dynasties, we have no other evidence than that from coins. In the annals of Ancient Indian History, we generally read that after the disintegration of the Mauryan empire, the Greeks, Partho-Scythians, and Yue-Chi or Kushans entered India, founded colonies, and established states some of which were long lived. The empire of the satraps of Ujjain lasted till the fourth century A.D. ; what is more, the invaders were assimilated by the indigenous population, and the

barbarians became Hindus. Sanskrit flourished and the theatre developed new features even if did not take its rise in the court of the Scythian Satraps. The Graeco-Buddhist art of Gandhara was born out of the mingling of Greeks and Hindus and produced distant effects reaching as far as Amaravati and even beyond the seas. The details of the history of this fascinating period bristle with difficult problems. The evidence is mostly numismatic, and the coins reveal the names of over fifty rulers of foreign extraction. It is their coins which not only give us their names but also enable us to fix their order of succession. As in the case of Indo-Bactrian Greek princes, many names of the Kshatrapa rulers have been revealed by their coins, which, again as they give the name and title not only of the ruler but also of his father, and what is most important, specify dates, enable us to arrange them in their order of succession and often to determine even the exact year in which one Kshatrapa ruler was succeeded by another.

The study of the coins also enables us to know something about the personality and personal accomplishments of the sovereigns. The *Tiger-slayer* type of Samudragupta exhibit him in Indian dress, slaying a tiger. The *Lyrist type* also depicts him in Indian dress, sitting cross legged, playing on the *Vina*, on the obverse, and Laxmi on the reverse. It is only through his *Asvamedha type* of coin that we come to know that he performed this imperial sacrifice, a fact which is not disclosed in any of his contemporary inscriptions or literature.

A proper study of coins also helps us to know something about the Administrative History of India. The coins, issued by the Malvas, Yaudheyas and Vrishnis, shed a welcome light on their Republican form of Government. The coins of these non-monarchical states confirm and corroborate the facts that we get in Indian literature and inscriptions.

The study of the coins again comes to the aid of the historian in locating the place of some of the local tribes of Ancient India. We know that the Yaudheyas were an oligarchic tribe and find numerous references to them in inscriptions and literature. But the problem is, where are they to be located ? This can easily be fixed by the provenance of their coins. We know that their coins have been found in the Eastern Punjab and all over the country between the Sutlej and Jumna rivers. It is this knowledge that enabled numismatists like Cunningham and others to locate

the place of the Yaudheyas with the Johiyas settled along the banks of the Sutlej in the region which is known as Johiya-bar. Likewise, on the basis of the finds of the coins the locality of the Malavas has been fixed in the regions of Central India. It is again through coins that the Madhyamika city has been identified with Nagari near Chitorgarh, which also contains the ruins of a large town.

Ancient Indian Numismatics has contributed a lot towards the reconstruction of the Religious History of India. The fact that the foreign dynasties like Indo-Parthians, Indo-Bactrians and Kshatrapas adopted Hinduism and fostered it, has been disclosed only by a proper study of their coins and coin-symbols. Gondophares, the founder of the Indo-Parthian dynasty, has one type of coins on the reverse of which figures Siva holding a trident. Similarly on some of the coins of the Kushana King Wema-Kadphises, we find Siva bearing a trident, sometimes with his bull Nandin behind and sometimes with gourd and tiger skin. Besides being a useful source of knowledge for the religious history of India, the study of Ancient Indian coins throws a welcome light on the antiquity of Hindu iconography, and the practice of image worship ; J.N. Banerji has well discussed the aid of numismatics towards the Study of Hindu Iconography in his scholarly book *The Development of Hindu Iconography* (1941).

Lastly, numismatic study offers useful clues to the economic conditions of Ancient India. It also sheds a welcome light on ancient trade and commerce. The pure gold coins of the Imperial Guptas reveal in unmistakable terms the economic prosperity and wealth of the country as far back as 4th and 5th cent. A.D. The debased currency of the later Guptas of the 6th century shows again the economic depression and instability of government caused by Hun inroads and other causes at the time. Thus a thorough study and comparison of weights and fineness of coins of different times show us in an unmistakable way the changes in the economic condition of the country. This is largely true in the case of India also. The Roman coins found in South India are helpful to the study of Indo-Roman commercial relations in the early centuries of the Christian era.

These facts naturally lead us to consider the problem of the antiquity of coinage in Ancient India. Contemporary archaeological and literary sources fully prove that various types of coins

were current in different parts of the country even before Alexander's entry into India. The Vedic *Nishka*, *Satamana* and *Suvarna* may have been ingots of gold of definite weights. But in later works such as the *Jatakas*, the Grammar of Panini and the *Arthasastra* of Kautilya, we have some references to gold coins called *Nishka* and *Suvarna*, silver coins called *Karshapanas* along with their multiples and subdivisions. The vedic *Satamana*, as its name implies, was based on the *mana* unit, a weight known to the *Rig Veda*. But the evidence of the law books and even of Kautilya is by no means clear or consistent on the weight and fineness of the standard coins or on their relation to token currency. It has been observed that silver and copper coinages were often independent of each other, and differed with areas of circulation. There seems to be no way of assessing the effects on currency of the attempts of the Nandas to standardize weights and measures or of the establishment of the Mauryan empire. The punch-marked silver coins that have been found in large numbers all over India have generally been identified with the silver *Karshapanas*, *dharanas*, or *puranas* (eldlings) as they have been variously called in legal literature. These coins bear on their surface, usually on one side, separate marks made at different times by different punches. Specimens in copper are not unknown, though rare. They are usually square or oblong, seldom circular. The marks 'hill and crescent' and 'peacock' have generally been recognized as peculiar to the Mauryan epoch; other marks are earlier and might well go back to the early fourth century B.C., if not the fifth. The king of Taxila is said to have presented Alexander with thirty talents of coined silver. These coins are indigenous in origin according to the opinion of many numismatists. V.A. Smith observes, 'the punch-marked coinage was a private coinage issued by guilds and silver smiths with the permission of the ruling powers' (C.C.I.M.I. p. 133). But systematic studies of the coin hoards, and their provenances have led scholars to suggest that they were struck by a central authority. D.B. Spooner and Walsh hold the same view.

Side by side with the punch-marked coins, die-struck coins came into existence in North-Western India towards the close of the 4th century B.C. with devices like the *svastika*, *bodhi tree* or *Vihara*, C.J. Brown observes: '"Double-die" coins, again of North-Western India, are better and show Iranian influence,

though devices like the bull and the elephant are Indian. But the Mitra coins of the second and first century B.C. with the names of ten kings (Sunga) in Brahmi script and the Mathura coins with twelve royal names, though double-die-struck, are free from foreign influence. The coins of Malwa illustrate the transition from punch-marked to the die-struck coinage. Thus a system of coinage originated in India and evolved on indigenous lines till Greek contact in the second century B.C. and the following centuries improved and enriched it.' (*The Coins of India*, Chapter I.)

The coinage of India was improved in the succeeding epochs under the influence of the artistic currencies of the Greeks and the Romans. The Greeks coins in India have disclosed to us the names of more than thirty rules, most of them unknown to other sources of History. Their characteristic features are portrait-heads and bilinguial legends; most of them are circular and conform to the Persian or Indian standard of weight. There is little doubt that the services of the very best artists of Bactria were made use of in the drawing of the many individualistic portraits of the earlier monarchs, Euthydemus, Demetrius, Euctratides and others, and the skill of the finished work still ranks these heads with the finest ever made. Gardner rightly oberves: 'The portraits of Demetrius, of Antimachus, and of Eucratides are among the most remarkable which have come down to us from antiquity, and the effect of them is heightened in each case by the introduction of a peculiar and strongly characteristic head-dress which is rendered with scrupulous exactness of detail.' (*The coins of the Greek and Scythic kings of Bacteria and India in the British Museum*, Intro. p. lvi). We miss this peculiarity in the coins of the many successors of the Indo-Greeks belonging to other foreign tribes, except when for a brief period obvious attempts at portraiture are discernible in the remarkable issues of Wima Kadphises and Huvishka. Demetrius struck copper coins with legends in two scripts—Greek and Kharoshthi on the obverse and the reverse respectively. Eucratides imitated him and issued silver and copper coins, and one of his copper coins contains the figure of Zeus, who is described as the city God of Kapisa. The coins of Apollodotos and Menander are abundant and their circulation at Broach as late as the first century A.D. is vouched for by the *Periplus*. The silver coins of Antialcidas are also numerous. The portraits on the obverse are so clear that we can gain some idea

of the personality of the Indo-Greek kings. Devices on the reverse include animals like the elephant and the bull. The Hellenistic influences of Bactrian coinage were gradually replaced by the introduction of Indian elements. It shows that 'The engravers were no mere slavish copyists of western models, but were giving free and spontaneous expression to their own ideas.' (*Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I p. 645).

The copper coins of Maues show Greek gods and goddesses and the elephant's head in imitation of a certain coin of Demetrius ; on one coin, he is seated on horse back ; this striking device is characteristic both of the Saka and Palhava coinage. Silver coins of Azes I and Azilises are abundant. As on Maues' coinage, Greek gods and goddesses appear on both silver and copper of these two kings, but now for the first time, an Indian goddess Laxmi is introduced. The legends on these coins deserve attention. Most of these foreign coins are bilingual, Greek and Kharoshthi scripts being used after their prototypes, while some of the Satrapal group contain legends in Brahmi script alone as was the norm of the native currencies. The Greek legends are only partially legible on some of these coins, the Kharoshthi ones are clearer.

The coinage of the Kushanas is divisible into several main groups ; the coins of Kujula Kadphises, those of Wima Kadphises the striking pieces of the Kanishka group of kings, and, lastly, the money of the later Kushanas. They have all their distinctive traits, and a simultaneous study of these groups indicates that one merges into the other. The Greek legend on the first group is generally illegible ; it is far clearer on the second. The Kushanas, issued gold as well as copper coins. The copper coins of Kadphises I contain the bull on the obverse and the Bactrian camel on the reverse. Kadphises II issued the double *stater*, and the quarter *stater*, and on some of these coins he appears cross-legged on a couch, or his head or bust is found. 'The portrait of the king is most realistic though hardly flattering—a corpulent figure with a long heavy face and a large nose, he appears wearing on his head a conical hat with streamers.' (Brown, *Coins of India*, p.35) On the reverse of his coins is found Siva or his characteristic symbol. The most important mark of Kanishka and Huvishka is the varied reverse. It is a remarkable thing especially in contrast with the single device feature of the coins of their predecessor Wima Kadphises. The large number of their gold and copper coins bear on

the reverse the figures of divinities belonging to various creeds, Zoroastrian, Indian, and Greek. The only two Indian deities appearing on Kanishka's money are Siva and Sakyamuni Buddha, while no real member of the Greek pantheon is ever to be found. On the obverse of some of his coins he is standing and on a few of his copper coins, sitting on a throne. Huvishka's copper coins show him seated cross-legged, seated with raised arms, reclining on a couch, and riding an elephant, and on the reverse many gods appear. Siva and Nandi are characteristic of the reverse of Vasudeva's issues, and on the other side the king is standing. The coins of the later Kushanas, the successors of Vasudeva, have on their reverse either Siva or Ardochso. They were soon to be characterised by only a partial bilinguality, differing from the earlier mode. The Greek script showed a progressive degradation until the legend almost ceased to be intelligible, and the second script, used to write only the king's name in 'Chinese fashion,' i.e. vertically under his extended arm, was Brahmi ; the reverse device as usual had the short descriptive label in Greek.

The Saka Kshatrapas of Western India continued their earlier coin-type during the 2nd and 3rd cent. A.D. The Kshatrapa rulers possessed a remarkable historic sense. The circular Brahmi legend on the reverse of their coins carefully mentions the name and title, not only of the ruler but also of his father. From the time of Jivadaman (175 A.D.), each coin issued from the mint began to bear the date of its issue, given behind the bust of the king. This has come to the aid of the modern historians to determine the chronology of the Western Kshatrapa rulers. The crescented three-arched hill with the Sun and the Moon on either side is the reverse symbol on the Kshatrapa coins. A few Kshatrapa rulers issued copper coins also, but they are anonymous. Generally they have elephant on the obverse and three-arched hill on the reverse with the Sun and the Moon on either side and the date of issue below.

The Yaudheyas and other republican tribes imitated the copper coinage of the Kushanas, just as the Kunindas and others of the Punjab had copied Greek and Saka types in the first century B.C.

The Age of the Imperial Guptas (320 to 600 A.D.) constitutes a formative period in the evolution of Indian coinage. Various coin types of the Gupta emperors are highly interesting as well

as instructive. They shed a welcome light on the personality of the sovereigns, on the economic prosperity of the empire and the immense wealth of the country. The study of these coins also attests the gradual Indianisation of the currency.

With the assumption of the imperial title Maharajadhiraja, Chandra Gupta I, the founder of the empire, started his gold coinage. The view of Allan that the coins bearing the figures of Chandragupta and his queen Kumara devi on the obverse are commemorative medals issued by his son Samudra Gupta is untenable. As mark of the disappearance of the foreign rule and the establishment of a new Hindu State, Chandra Gupta I must have issued his gold coins. Had Samudra Gupta issued these coins as commemorative medals, the name of the commemorator would have appeared on these coins as it does on the commemorative medals of Eucratides. As it is, Samudra Gupta's own name is conspicuous by its absence.

On the obverse of the coins of Chandra Gupta I, we find the king and his queen Kumara devi standing and facing each other. The legend is *Lichchhavayah* which is probably in acknowledgement of the help of the Guptas had received from their Lichchhavi relations.

The importance of the recent discovery (1954) of a hoard of Gupta coins at Bayana (Bharatpur State) is very great. The coins of this large hoard have been critically edited by Prof. A.S. Altekar and published by the Numismatic Society of India (1954). It is the catalogue of the biggest hoard of ancient Indian Gold coins ever discovered and recovered in the history of Indian Archaeology. It gives an accurate and full description of the 1821 coins of the hoard which were recovered, recording carefully the size and weight of each. The special importance of the Bayana hoard lies in the fact that it discloses a number of types and varieties that were so far unknown. The hoard shows that Kumara Gupta I was perhaps the greatest moneyer of the Gupta dynasty, for it discloses for the first time as many as five new types of his (1) the king and the queen type, (2) Chhatra type, (3) the lyrist type, (4) the rhinoceros slayer type and (5) the elephant-rider lion-slayer type. The hoard discloses several new poetic hemistiches. Thus the gold coins of the Bayana hoard supplement in every way the already known types described in Allan's *Catalogue of the Gupta coins of the British Museum.*

Chandra Gupta I was succeeded by his son Samudra Gupta. Samudra Gupta had a versatile personality, as remarkable for physical power as for intellectual eminence, artistic predilections political sagacity and administrative insight. Like his father Samudra Gupta paid considerable attention to his coinage. He was not content to issue coins in a single type. He introduced a pleasing variety in his coin-types and his noble example was emulated by his successors, as a consequence of which we posses in Gupta gold coins the most artistic series of gold coins ever issued in Ancient India. So far six coin types of Samudra Gupta are known: of these the Standard, the Archer and the Battle-axe refer to his military exploits and the Asvamedha type commemorates their successful culmination. The other two types give us a glimpse of the personality and the personal accomplishments of the ruler. On the Lyrist type, C.J. Brown makes the following significant remarks :

> 'The excellent modelling of the king's figure, the skilful delineation of the features, the careful attention to details and the general ornateness of the design in the best specimens constitute this type as the highest expression of Gupta numismatic art.' (*The Coins of India*, p. 43.)

To Samudra Gupta belongs the credit of introducing poetical legends on Indian coins for the first time. Revival of Sanskrit was the dominant feature of the Gupta Age; according to the Allahabad Pillar Inscription, Samudra Gupta was himself a poet of high merit. It is therefore natural that he should have felt that his coin-legends should be in Sanskrit poetry, announcing his achievements in adequate and appropriate language. The obverse legend on the standard type is a line in *Upagiti* metre running as follows:

'Samarasata Vitata Vijayo Jitaripurajito divam Jayati.'

The reign of Chandra Gupta II is remarkable for its numismatic activity. Minting of gold coins was done more extensively during his rule than in any prior or later reign. Chandra Gupta II continued the Archer and Tiger-slayer gold coins of his father, replacing in the latter case the tiger by the lion. The conquest of Malwa, Gujarat and Kathaiwar necessiated the issue of silver currency, for the residents of this area were accustomed to it for more than three hundred years during the Scythian rule. This emperor also started issuing copper currency.

Besides imitating Samudra Gupta's Asvamedha type and some of the types of his own father, Kumara Gupta introduced the Peacock type and the Elephant-rider and Pratapa types. He struck silver coins. The empire continued undiminished down to the death of Skanda Gupta. Gupta mints were fairly active during the reign of Skanda Gupta. His silver coinage is as copious as that of his father, he supplanted some of its types by introducing new ones like the Bull and the Altar types. But his gold coinage is much less copious and shows only three certain types. The financial strain of the Huna war had also told upon the treasury, for many of his gold coins are heavily adulterated.

The Hunas issued several coin types in silver and copper, some of them original. Their earliest coins were issued on the model of the Sassanian type. They are thin and large and have the Sassanian bust on the obverse and the Altar and Fire-attendants on the reverse. When the Hunas conquered the regions of Punjab and Kashmir, they issued a copper currency closely imitating the Kushana proto-type with the standing king on the obverse and the seated goddess on the reverse. With the annexation of Central India, they came into contact with the Gupta coinage. They did not issue any gold coins but were content to issue silver and copper currencies, closely imitating those of the Guptas.

The coins of the various Rajaput princes ruling in Hindustan and Central India are usually gold, copper or billon, very rarely silver. The gold coins are all '*drammas*' in weight. The gold coins of the Kalachuri dynasty of Dahala, of the six Chandela kings of Mahoba in Bundelkhand, of the Tomara dynasty of Ajmer and of Rathor kings of Kanauj bear the familiar goddess (*Laxmi*) on the obverse, with a slight deviation from the Gupta device, in that the goddess has four arms instead of two; on the reverse is an inscription giving the king's name in old Nagari. On the gold of the last three princes of the Kalachuri dynasty of Mahakosala, in the Madhya Pradesh, a rampant lion is substituted for the seated goddesses on the obverse. The seated bull and horsemen, the almost invariable devices on Rajput copper and billon coins, were introduced by the Brahman kings of Gandhara, who first used them on silver. Similar coins were struck by the Tomara and Chauhan dynasties of Delhi, the Rathors of Kanuaj and Rajput kings of Marwar. A few copper coins of the Mahakosala

kings and of Jayavarman of Mahoba have a figure of Hanuman on the obverse and a Nagari legend on the reverse.

The Coinage of South India

Numismatics, which forms an interesting and important branch of archaeology in relation to the history of the rest of India, has so far not yielded, except in a few instances, any striking results for the general history of South India. South Indian coinages, however, have 'as yet not received a scientific treatment in any way to be compared with that which has obtained such valuable historical results from the coins of the North' (Rapson —*Sources of Indian History : Coins*, p. 123). Some of the coins already discovered present great difficulties to the student and offer less reward for his labours than that coins of the North.' Really ancient coins are rare and contain no dates and few intelligible legends, often only the ruler's name or title; also the devices upon them are often crude and indistinct. The rectangular pieces of impure silver bearing several punch-marks, the Puranas (eldlings) of the law books were common to both Northern and Southern India and certainly belong to the centuries before Christ; such silver punch-marked coins have been found on many sites in the Godavari basin in Kolhapur, Coimbatore and Trichinopoly, in the Bimlipatam Taluk of the Vizagapatam district, Singavaram in the Krishna district, Madurai and several other places ; copper punch-marked coins were also known and this type of coinage may be taken to have gone out of circulation about 200 A.D. In later times the principal coinage of the South was struck in gold, not silver ; copper was used for smaller denominations. Of gold coins there were generally two denominations, the *varaha*—perhaps deriving its name from the Chalukya crest of boar, also called *pon*, *hun*, pagoda and *paradaos* (Portuguese)—usually weighing a *Kalanju* (Molucca bean) or 50 to 60 grains ; and the *fanam* being a tenth of the *varaha*, its weight 5 to 6 grains, conforming to the *manjadi*. The earliest gold coins are spherules of plain gold bearing a minute punch-mark ; a little later came the *padma-tankas* which were thin cup-shaped pieces stamped with punches, at first on one side only and then on both ; and finally came the die-struck pieces of which the thick small Vijayanagar pagodas are the best surviving specimens. There was a general preference for small coins, and the silver *tares* of Calicut, only one or two grains in weight, furnish some of the smallest specimens of coins known.

During the early centuries of the Christian era Roman imperial coins of gold and silver were imported in considerable quantity in the course of trade and circulated freely in the country ; the small copper coins bearing Roman devices and legends might have been locally produced by foreign settlers. The author of the *Periplus* makes frequent mention of large imports of specie in the ports, and the specie mainly consisted of Roman coins. Hoards of these different metals have been unearthed in various localities of South India, and they undoubtedly comprised the wealth of the rich South Indian magnates, traders and producers. There were also Roman settlements in the country, as excavations at Arikamedu near Pondicherry and other places have proved, and Roman coins were in great demand there. Robert Sewell in his lucid account (J.R.A.S. 1904) of these hoards refers to a large number of Roman copper coins, some among them being of the emperors Arcadius and Honorius, mostly collected from Madurai and its environs. They were in his opinion imported from Rome as currency for purchases of comparatively small value by 'Romans or persons using Roman coins in daily life actually resident at Madurai for a time.' Colonel Tufnell refers to another class of coins found at Madurai, 'small Insignificant copper coins, scarce the size of a quarter of a farthing, and closely resembling the early issues of the native mints,' but which are at the same time Roman in character. On one side they bear the imperial head, very much worn, sometimes with faint traces of an inscription ; the other side shows the figures of three Roman soldiers standing, spear in hand.

The Satavahans used lead for many of their issues, and their coins bear legends of the names of kings which confirm the Puranic lists of these names. One of the most interesting types of these coins is that bearing a two-masted ship on the obverse, an indication of the maritime power and activity of the Andhras ; the same design is found on some copper coins of about the same date or a little later, from farther south.

The earliest *Padma-tankas* were perhaps struck by the Kadambas, but one of the coins that can be most satisfactorily dated is a base silver piece with a lion device and the title *Vishama Siddhi* on the obverse which clearly belongs to Vishnuvardhana (615-33), the founder of the long line of Eastern Chalukyas rulers. The practice of punch-marking on the gold-coinage lingered long

after its disuse on silver and copper ; and a large hoard of coins struck by the Telugu-Chodas of Nellore in the thirteenth century, found in 1913 at Kodur, shows that the *Padma-tanka* type had a long history and wide ramifications. Of more or less the same type but of somewhat better fabric are the gold coins of the Chola emperors Rajendra I and Rajadhiraja I and of the Eastern Chalukya Rajaraja I discovered as a large hoard in Dhavalesvaram (Godavari) in 1946. Nagari legends generally incomplete, appear on Kakatiya coins and continue in those of Vijayanagar ; they are also found on the coins of some other dynasties like the Kadambas of Goa and the Cholas. The legends on coins of other dynasties are in Kannada, Telugu or Tamil according to the locality in which they were struck.

During the period of their paramountcy in Southern India, the Cholas issued coins of gold, silver, and copper. Specimens of the gold coins are rare ; silver coins are not so rare, and copper pieces of different sizes are met with every day. These coins, generally speaking, are of two types—one carrying on both sides the Chola symbol of the tiger in the centre, flanked by the symbols of the subject powers, the Chera bow and the Pandyan fish, with a legend giving the name of the king, the other called by Prinsep and Elliot, the 'Ceylon type,' in which the symbols give place to 'a rude human figure,' standing on the obverse and seated on the reverse. As the 'Ceylon type' makes its appearance in the reign of Rajaraja I and the type with the symbols is known to persist for a long time after, even up to the reign of Kulottunga I, the view, common at one time, that coins of the 'Ceylon type' are later than those of the other type must be modified. In fact, it may be doubted if we have any coin specimens clearly of an age anterior to Rajaraja I, so that the 'Ceylon type' would appear to be really coeval with the other. None of the known specimens of Chola coins have yet been identified with any of the coins mentioned in contemporary inscriptions.

The Hoysala power, which came into prominence under Vishnu-Vardhana (1111-1141) over the ashes of the Western Chalukya power, had for their cognizance a maned-lion. Some heavy gold coins with old Kannada legends, which bear that emblem, have been, assigned to them. On one of these appears the interesting inscription, *Sri Talakadu Gonda*.

The Pagodas of many Vijayanagar kings are known ; they are

small and dumpy, and were issued also in their half and quarter divisions. Their legends were at first either in Telugu, Kannada or Nagari, while later kings used Nagari exclusively.

The coinage of the short-lived sultanate of Madura, usually in billon and copper, follows the contemporary Delhi models and is hardly distinguishable from Delhi issues except by its southern type of calligraphy. The gold and silver coins of the Bahmani Sultans also followed the Delhi patterns on a more generous scale. In those of earlier reigns there is some variety in arrangement and design, but later a single design was adopted for both metals. The earliest copper closely followed that of Delhi, but innovations soon appeared, and the copper standard underwent many and frequent changes. The five sultanates that succeeded the Bahmani Kingdom had their own separate issues, though not so well turned out.

Chronology

We now pass on to Chronology. Now the first observation to make here is that somehow it has happened that in discussions of early South Indian Chronology there has been prevalent a fairly widespread error of using geological arguments in historical discussions. Now this has to be said with some emphasis, because the talk of Lemuria, of Tamil having been spread all over the area of the Indian Ocean before the ocean submerged the land, and of its being the oldest language in the world—this talk has been the pastime of some persons for too long. It is time that some one stood up and said, 'It is all bosh!' Human life on earth in any form that concerns us as students of history had its first beginnings not more than thirty or thirty-five thousand years ago at the highest. But geological changes relate to conditions of earth before any life (not only human life) came into existence. Submergence of continents and emergence of oceans are not occurrences of every day, and the last great change of this character is put by geologists some millions of years ago. What has this got to do with the history of humanity, which stretches back at most to about five, six, or ten or twenty thousand years from now? For that length of time would take us back to the old stone age, an age when men were hardly different from animals, when they had no language, no speech and no culture, and were still living in the food-gathering stage.

A word may be said in passing about the most strenuous

efforts of Fr. H. Heras to demonstrate that a form of proto-Tamil was the language spoken and written by the Mohenjo Daro people, that there were Ballalas, Pandyas and Cholas among them, and so on. I am all admiration for the industry and the consistency with which the learned Father set about this business, and he recently published in their final form the processes leading him to his conclusions, though the conclusions themselves had been set forth earlier in considerable detail in several articles and lectures; but large parts of the argument are, to say the least, very unconvincing. A great deal of classification and simplification has resulted from his study of these symbols as well as from that of other scholars. But his interpretations seem to take no account whatever of the many difficulties philological, morphological, cultural and historical in the way of our accepting them. At any rate there seems to be no reason to prefer them to the readings and interpretations offered by other writers like Waddel and Pran Nath*

The story of the Three Tamil Sangams has only to be read in the original for one to see that there is no history there. Like the Buddha, the Jina and Vyasa, here also one historical reality has been multiplied many-fold by the myth-making instinct of the people.

Another tendency of which mention has been made elsewhere is that of treating famous figures as contemporaneous whether in fact they were so or not. Likewise we have collections of tales in Tamil, *Tamil-navalar charitai* which is about two hundred and fifty years old at the most. Some recent hoax, *Vinodarasamanjari*, has given popularity to a number of most unauthenticated accounts, and scholars have wasted their efforts in attempting chronological reconstructions on the basis of these tales.

Even with regard to our eras opinions are not quite settled, as you might believe. The origins of the Vikrama and Saka eras have not been satisfactorily elucidated, and the Kollam era which is peculiar to South India seems to be running in two versions more or less independent of each other. There are two different beginnings, one purporting to date from the foundation of Quilon,

* Recently Hrozny has sought to explain the Mohenjo Daro script as that of a dominantly Indo-European idiom with a mixture of non Indo-European elements. IHQ, XVI, Dec, 1940, pp. 683-88.

and the other from the date of its destruction. The so-called 'destruction' must be taken to have been an important incident in a war or otherwise, from which an era was begun, rather than the permanent disappearance of the city, which has been a flourishing port almost since the date of its foundation.

The internal chronology of a king's reign is often determined from the spread of his inscriptions over his regnal years. The most important dynasty of South India were the Cholas, whose inscriptions account for something like a third of the total number of South Indian inscriptions; they followed an excellent practice in this regard. The first great monarch of the line, Rajaraja, started the practice of having a set *prasasti* in which the important achievements of the ruler should be recorded in a definitive form. That *prasasti* was repeated in every one of the grants recorded in his reign, and as the reign advanced and fresh achievements fell to the credit of the monarch, the *prasasti* was expanded accordingly. One may trust oneself almost unreservedly to the guidance of these *prasastis* and exploit their growth through the reigns as much as possible. Without such guidance it would not at all be possible to evolve the relative internal chronology of the events of a reign. Again, there are other aids to the historian which are found in other practices of particular dynasties. The Cholas, for instance, had a rule by which a Rajakesari was always succeeded by a Parakesari. This rule has come to furnish very great aid in dealing with the interval between the death of Parantaka I and the accession of Rajaraja I, one of the most intricate periods of Imperial Chola chronology. Likewise among the Pandyas there was an alternation of the titles Mara- and Jata-varman. There are other instances known also among the Eastern Chalukyas, Eastern Gangas and so on.

One very intriguing phrase, most commonly met with in Pandya inscriptions and occasionally in other records also, is the phrase *ediramandu* (*lit.* opposite year). What is the meaning of it, and on what basis was it reckoned? Sometimes it has been assumed that inscriptions of one and the same reign had a fixed figure on one side or the other of the phrase *ediramandu*. But this hypothesis has not proved true on verification. And inscriptions of one and the same reign seem to give figures at random on either side of this phrase. We now follow the practice of arriving at the regnal year of the record in question by adding up all the figures given

in it, sometimes as many as four, all connected by the phrase of 'ediramandu' being repeated the required number of times.

Another type of aid we get is the presence of definitely astronomical data, the *Panchanga* data being given. One may think that this is a blessing, but scholars who have worked in the field have reason almost to wish that these data were not available, at least in such profusion. Only one scholar was able to make a satisfactory use of them—not all, but only some of them—and that was Prof. Kielhorn. He adopted the rule that he would not make any emendations in the data given by the inscriptions and that he would not accept any single date, however satisfactory, if it stood by itself unrelated to at least one other date, equally satisfactory. Thus his rule was that if two separate inscriptions without being amended in any manner yielded dates which were historically reconcilable with each other, then any one of them may be taken as an established datum. This caution was very necessary because the details of any particular group may repeat themselves thrice in a century and you will not be able to determine the corresponding year in the Christian era accurately unless you have the data which fix the date in the Christian era definitely. That fixation cannot be attained without two inter-connected dates, and this problem is very acute when we deal with the history of the medieval Pandyas. It is there that we have a large number of inscriptions furnishing these astrological data, but data which are not easy to reconcile with one another. It is in that field that Prof. Kielhorn's great work has been of invaluable assistance in laying a path for evolving a more or less continuous account of that period. Kielhorn's methods and conclusions have been more or less closely followed by his successors. Jacobi and Sewell almost strictly adhered to his rules, but they were a little more lax than Kielhorn was in introducing emendations in the original data. To the enormous industry of L.D. Swamikannu Pillai which has given us that monumental work, the *Indian Ephemeris*, every student of South Indian history will be eternally grateful. The professional astronomers are not still quite decided about the accuracy of the Ephemeris. And in so recent a date as A.D. 1676, an inscription, the grant of Ekoji to the Dutch Company, gives a date which is not worked out in the *Ephemeris*—Margali 30, while the *Ephemeris* gives only 29 days for that month in that year. That instance is proof that though the *Ephemeris* is very

valuable as a guide, it does not seem to be astronomically quite above criticism. And when you come across the work of an scholar like Venkatasubbiah of Mysore, astronomy becomes an extremely uncertain thing, because from the arguments he employs to criticise his predecessors and to explain his own results, we are unable to see that his results are any better than those which he would replace. Swamikannu Pillai made a famous attempt to demonstrate that five Pandyan kings were contemporaneously ruling for several generations together ; and he based his conclusions on astronomical data which he set out to interpret in the light of Marco Polo's statement that Five Brothers were ruling simultaneously in the kingdom of Ma'bar. Marco Polo was a contemporary witness. He travelled in India in 1292 and observed that five brothers were ruling. Either Marco Polo was not well informed, or there was a persistent confusion between Pandavas and Pandyas ; it cannot be said that the efforts of Swamikannu Pillai to prove this succession have yielded satisfactory results.

We must always bear in mind that at best all our chronological results are only approximations, particularly in early history ; so that one can make no bones about shifting a date about 10 or 15 years this way or that. This cannot be done of course for dates that rest on an eclipse or some such definite datum; in one case the number of days that had elapsed in the Kaliyuga at the time of the record is mentioned. But speaking generally, South Indian history is still in the making, and we must beware of tying ourselves down to a chronology rigid in all its details until our investigations have proceeded much further than they have yet done. We have not yet got, for instance, an authoritative account even of the Pallava political history, much less of dynasties like the Gangas, Kadambas and so on. There are indeed books on these subjects, but they do not carry you far. They are very often pure rehashes of published reports, the data in which have not been passed by any sound process of historical criticism. One often finds that the conclusions reached on a topic from the Pandyan point of view undergo a considerable revision when the Chola side is taken up and a correlation is attempted between the Pandya and Chola history. There will perhaps be some further shifting of several of the dates ranging from the 5th to the 10th century A.D., because there are a number of synchronisms suggested by the Pallava and Ganga inscriptions which have not yet been

critically studied, and in some cases we do not have the accurate data which would be necessary before we could reach a very precise conclusion.

Where we have several inscriptions dated in the Saka era as we have under the Rashtrakutas, later Chalukyas, the Vijayanagar rulers etc., the difficulties of chronology disappear largely, and a clear and authentic sequence of events becomes more easy to establish. Generally speaking, chronology becomes less and less of a problem as we approach our own times.

One final word on the present position of historical study. There is much to inspire hope. The number of periodicals that are devoted to the study of Indian historical subjects is on the increase, and conferences held from time to time to discuss topics of historical interest are also becoming increasingly useful and numerous ; still one feels that we are not making any very definite or steady approach towards building up proper and sound standards of research in all the activity that is going on. Our journals are found to publish very valuable articles by the side of mere repetitions, sometimes with new error added to old. In that respect perhaps our brethren in the scientific field are in a much better position. If one turns, for instance, to the pages of the scientific numbers of the journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, one seems to get on the whole less room for dissatisfaction. In fact even on the archaeological and numismatic side, that journal was holding up a much higher standard than other journals which need not be named. There is a real necessity for much winnowing being done, for distinguishing the wheat from the chaff, and for building up a proper standard of historical research. One is here reminded of a passage in the book of Langlois and Seignobos to which we have made so many references already. That passage seems to reveal a state of things that prevailed in France not long ago and furnishes a parallel to the situation we find in India to-day, and is therefore well worth our attention. "Towards the end of the Second Empire there was in France no enlightened public opinion on the subject of historical work. Bad books of historical erudition were published with impunity, and sometimes even procured undeserved rewards for their authors. It was then that the founders of the *Revue Critique d'histoire et de litterature* undertook to combat a state of things which they rightly deemed demoralising. With this object they administered public chastise-

ment to those scholars who showed lack of conscience or method, in a manner calculated to disgust them with erudition for ever. They performed sundry notable executions, not for the pleasure of it, but with the firm resolve to establish a censorship and a wholesome dread of justice, in the domain of historical study. Bad workers henceforth received no quarter, and though the *Revue* did not exert any great influence on the public at large, its police operations covered a wide enough radius to impress most of those concerned with the necessity of sincerity and respect for method. During the last twenty-five years the impulse thus given has spread beyond all expectation.' (pp. 137-8).

Hints to Students

Some hints are offered here to the student who is still a beginner in the craftmanship of history. There are many excellent manuals, some of which will be found in the bibliography to this book, that are worth reading at the outset, for that will save him from committing a number of minor mistakes by giving him useful tips on many matters. What follows here is by no means meant as a substitute for such reading, but as a supplement to it. The work of a student comprises three well-marked stages : the choice of a subject, the gathering and arranging of the material relating to it, and the writing out of the results of his study.

In the choice of a subject the student must have a due regard for his own taste and equipment, the scope offered by the subject for a fresh study, and the accessibility of the material bearing on it. With the courses of study organised at present in Mysore and Madras, and this is true of some other Universities as well, no student starts with an equipment that enables him to start work directly on any subject of South Indian History. The main difficulty is one of languages, and the linguistic equipment of the graduates of our universities is indeed very defective from the standpoint of historical research. And this can be made good only by readiness on the part of the student to exert himself in acquiring the necessary equipment. For no original work is possible without capacity to study up the original sources or at least to control their use in discussions of evidence. And it is not difficult to gain this capacity by application and constant practice for some time. There have been instances within my knowledge of students starting work with no initial knowledge of epigraphy, or Telugu, or Tamil, and gaining such a grounding in these as

has enabled them to read and criticise their sources at first hand. As a rule it would be well for the student to look upon his first year after graduation as a period of preparation for research. And there is scope here for our universities to offer short courses of an intensive character in Archaeology, Linguistics and Diplomatics, which students could take with advantage before they actually enter upon research. The study of some modern European languages other than English is also very desirable as much work on Indology is done and published in these languages which does not appear in English at all, or at least not sufficiently early to be useful to the student in his work. Whether this language should be French, German, Dutch, or Portuguese must depend on the subject of the student's interest. Sanskrit, Persian, and Marathi are also indispensable for particular branches of Indian historical study.

Often the student looks to the teacher to name the subject of his research. And often a student who starts like that looks to the teacher also for everything else, sometimes even the actual writing out of the thesis. Perhaps the student is not altogether to blame for this, for throughout his Degree course he has generally done very little for himself or by himself, but has had everything done for him. But this plan does not work in the domain of research where what a student gains by contact with his teacher is strictly limited by his own capacity for self-education and self-expression. It would be well for the student to put himself to some trouble to discover his own interest and choose a subject suited to it; he must of course depend on his teacher for advice on the scope for work in the chosen subject, the bibliography relating to it and so on, at first, though if he does his work diligently he will soon surpass his teacher in his detailed knowledge of these things.

Each student must develop his own plan in the study of the sources and the accumulation of aids to his memory in the form of notes, extracts, memoranda and so on. The only general advice that can be offered appears simple and obvious, but not so easy to follow in practice as it looks. The notes and extracts made must be clear and must contain exact references to his sources, for otherwise most of the work will have to be done a second time at a later stage, and some of it may be forgotten altogether. It is wise not to formulate a subject far too precisely

at first or to confine one's reading too narrowly. But unless one happens to be in the happy position of being able to devote an indefinite number of years to the study of one's subject, one must have a due regard to the time at one's disposal in choosing the topic for study. The loose-leaf and the index-card are generally recommended as the most convenient carriers of notes and extracts and this will, in practice, be found much more handy than voluminous notebooks ; but there is a disadvantage against which careful provision must be made ; it is much easier not to miss a card or a single sheet of paper than a note-book ; and no precaution is superflous that would ensure that the student has before him at the time of his final writing out of his results, all the notes and references that he has accumulated on the topic of the chapter or section in the course of his study. A more serious charge sometimes levelled against the system of loose-leaves and cards is that it restricts the scope for the play of mind by mechanising the processes of research ; and it is up to the scholar to be conscious of this danger and prevent its occurrence. Whatever the chances may be of such a deterioration of method setting in over work spread over long years or done in the midst of other preoccupations, a student working for a definite period on a selected topic should find it easy to keep his mind constantly switched on to his subject as it were, and to respond quickly to the impact of each new datum as it comes along his path ; and this is the surest method of keeping research from degenerating into a routine business. An alert and mobile mind that does not run into grooves is the most important requisite for success in the interpretation and proper presentation of new data, or reinterpretation of old data in the light of new ; an awareness of this requirement and practice in the consideration of alternative interpretations of given data are the best means of ensuring it.

The task of writing out the results of the study forms the last stage of the student's work. Often considerable difficulty is felt here mainly owing to the student having to write in a foreign idiom that he has not quite made his own. Hard work on his part and timely guidance from the teacher both in the planning of chapters and sections and their writing will go far to secure the highest quality of work possible under the given conditions. Every one must do his best ; more cannot be demanded of him ; nor can it be less. 'It is wholly improper for the historian to say that

because he cannot write like Thucydides he will not strive to write well.'*

The rule regulating the distribution of matter between the reading text and notes cannot be put better than in the following words of Jusserand :†. 'The proofs, the references, the discussions of most points should be put at their proper place ; that is in the notes and appendices. The cook has to peel his potatoes; but he does not peel them on the dinning-room table.'

* Jusserand and others, *The writing of History*, p. 84.
† Ibid p. 12.

CHAPTER V

THE SOURCES FOR MEDIEVAL AND MODERN INDIAN HISTORY

I. THE TURKISH PERIOD.
II. THE MUGHULS.
III. THE MARATHAS.
IV. THE BRITISH PERIOD.
  (a) The Portuguese.
  (b) The Dutch.
  (c) The French.
  (d) The English.

So far, we have described the nature of the main sources for the History of Independent Ancient India. We now enter upon a long period of several centuries, when Indians were no longer left to themselves and had to come to terms with aggressive and domineering aliens who generally had little sympathy or love for them and their culture. The first newcomers were Turks by race and the adherents of the youngest religion in the world, Islam. The History of Islam in India is the story of a continuous adjustment and mutual influences in the midst of many conflicts between two cultures with well-marked traits of their own. The Muslim conquest of Northern India was effected towards the end of the twelfth century after a bitter struggle which dragged its dreary length for the best part of two centuries. After a century of halt and such consolidation as the conquered allowed, attempts followed in the fourteenth century to subjugate the Deccan and South India ; these efforts resulted in the formation of the independent Sultanate of the Bahmani Kingdom (1347) about a decade after the resistance of the Hindu South to Islam had found its focus in Vijayanagar (1336). The Mughal conquest of the North in the sixteenth century and of the South in the seventeenth was a relatively easier task. Beyond doubt large numbers entered India during these long centuries from the Islamic countries of Western and Central Asia and even beyond, for war, government, trade, literature and the arts ; but many also went back and there is no certain means of determining the proportion of foreigners to local converts in the Muslim population of India.

The historians of this period of Indian History possess one marked advantage over the scholars interested in the preceding period. The Hindus showed little interest in historical literature, and the Sanskrit chronicles and biographical works that have survived can be counted on our fingers. The Muslims gave themselves much more to genuine historical writing than the Hindus, and a number of historical works were produced under the patronage of the Sultans. They were mostly written by Muslim authors who concern themselves more with kings and courts and wars and intrigues, say little about the life of the common folk, and almost exclusively present the course of events from the conqueror's stand-point. The reactions of the Hindus have to be understood in general only by laboriously piecing together data drawn from stray and obscure sources. The history of Vijayanagar and of the Marathas is, however, much better known than that of Hindus and Hindu kingdoms elsewhere. The Muslim writers were seldom free from a religious bias that made them indifferent to the culture of the Hindus. These Persian historical prose works should be supplemented by a study of the contemporary foreign observations, epigraphical researches, coins and monuments. Only then can we get an accurate idea of the Medieval period of Indian History.

Many of the Persian historical prose works have been rendered into English but the translations are not always reliable. The translations of some of these Persian works as given in *The History of India as told by its own Historians, comprising the Muhammadan period by Sir Henry M. Eliot and continued by John Dowson* in eight volumes (1866), though universally taken as an authority of the first class and even regarded by many as the last word on the subject, is not free from inaccuracies. The various Persian histories given in it are misleading and unreliable. The proper names have been mistranslated and the Persian idioms have been misunderstood. Prof. Hodivala in his *Studies in Indo-Muslim History* (1939) has rectified a large number of errors of interpretation and translation and employed his expert knowledge as a numismatist in correcting various toponyms and determining the exact chronology. The Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone's *The History of India* (fifth edition, London, 1866), mainly based on the evidences gathered from some of the medieval chroniclers like Ferishta, Khafi Khan and others, provides the most comprehensive survey of the Turkish,

Mughul and Maratha periods of Indian history up to the third battle of Panipat 1761. V. A. Smith writes : 'Elphinstone knew the Maratha country and people so intimately that his narrative counts as a primary authority for some purposes.' Edward Thomas's *Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi* (London 1871) also provides some valuable information on the subject. Stanley Lane Poole's standard work on *Medieval India under Muhammadan Rule* (Story of the Nations) (London, 1906) needs no introduction to any one interested in Indian History. Although mainly based on the translations of Elliot and Dowson and prejudiced in some places, it remains still one of the best surveys of period. *The Cambridge History of India* Vol. III *Turks and Afghans* edited by Wolsley Haig (Cambridge 1928), mostly written by European scholars, may also be consulted. Among the works written by Indians, may be mentioned Iswari Prasad's *History of Medieval India (from 647 to the Moghul Conquest)* Allahabad (1928), and Asirvadilal Srivastava's *The Sultanate of Delhi* (2nd ed. 1954). There are also some good biographies of some of the prominent personalities of the period. Mohammad Habib's *Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni—A study* (Aligarh 1927), is more scholarly than Muhammad Nazim's *Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna* (Cambridge—1931). Dr. A. Mahdi Hussain's *The Rise and Fall of Muhammad-bin-Tughlak* (London, 1938) is the best possible account of the main achievements of Muhammad-bin-Tughlak. Among the provincial histories, *The History of Gujarat* by H. C. Bailey stands as a pioneer work. This famous book gives a graphic picture of Western India during the Muhammadan rule and describes in detail the Muslim dynasties who ruled over Gujarat, their rise and fall, their wars with neighbours and Imperial Delhi. Published in 1866, and partially based on a translation by Prof. Dowson, this work forms a sequel to Elliot's History of the Muhammadan Empire in India as told by its own historians. Mr. Commissariat's *History of Gujarat* (1938) forms a splendid supplement to the above mentioned work. Stewart's *History of Bengal* is very useful on the historical role of Bengal in Medieval times. On its cultural side, we have works like *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan* (1200—1550 A.D.)—mainly based on Islamic Sources by A. M. Ashraf, J.R.A.S.B. 1935 (Letters) ; *The Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi* by Qureishi, I. H. (Lahore 1942) ; *The Cultural Aspects of Muslim Rule in India* ; and *Education in Muslim India* both by S. M.

Jafar. Inscriptions brought out in Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica and other learned periodicals throw light on several aspects of the subject.

The fundamental Persian chroniclers of the Turkish period are (1) Amir Khusrau, (2) Barani, (3) Isami, (4) Wassaf, (5) Shams-l-Siraj Afif, (6) Minhaj-us-Siraj, (7) Ferishta and others. Amir Khusrau, 'the Prince of poets,' 'the Parrot of Hind,' a prolific writer of very elegant poetry, prose and music, mystic, philosopher and politician, rose to fame under Balban, became the tutor of his eldest son, prince Muhammad, then Librarian of the Imperial Library at Delhi under Jalal-ud-din Khilji, and lived to enjoy the patronage of Ghiyas-us-din Tughlak before he died in A.D. 1325. Khusrau was also a soldier and took part in many campaigns of which he has given an account in his works. He was a master of poetic prose, many Hindi words occur in his writings, and he is sometimes reckoned as a writer of Urdu. Ziauddin Barani, the historian, who knew Khusrau well, declared him to be the greatest of all poets, ancient and modern ; for whereas other poets had excelled in one or two forms of verse—the *qita*, the *qasida*, the *ghazal*, the *rubai*—Khusrau was pre-eminent in all. Khusrau was also a master-musician well versed in the technique of the art and is known to have held discussions with Gopal Nayak, a renowned musician of the South in his time.

Amir Khusrau's prose-work, the *Khazain-ul-Futuh* is the official history of Alauddin's campaigns. It has often been referred to by the later historians of India. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan has quoted it in the second volume of his *Asarus-Sanadid*, and Sir Henry Elliot has noticed it in the third volume of his *History of India as told by her own Historians*. Prof. Habib has translated it into English with notes and parallel passages from other Persian writers under the title of '*The Campaigns of Alauddin Khilji*' (Madras 1931). 'A careful examination of the *Khazain-ul-Futuh* will enable us to obtain a fairly good idea of the art of war in the early middle ages. Even where he tells us nothing new, he serves to confirm the accounts of others. He did not sit and brood in a corner. He mingled with the highest and the greatest in the land, and when he took up his pen, it was to write with a first-hand knowledge of affairs. The sections on the Deccan campaigns are a permanent contribution to Indian historical literature.' (Habib : *The Campaigns of Alauddin Khilji xiv*). The *Khazain-ul-Futuh* is practically a conti-

nuation of *Fath-e-Nama* of Kabiruddin, the court historian of Alauddin Khilji. The *Fath-e-Nama* had made a detailed description of the earlier events unnecessary, and Khusrau merely summarises them to enable his book to stand on its own feet. The *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* of Barani (1286-1359) is the history of the Delhi Sultanate from Balban to the 6th regnal year of Firoz Shah Tughlaq. It is practically a continuation of the *Tabakat-i-Nasiri*. Barani was a man of noble descent, whose forefathers had held high offices under the Khilji Sultans. Barani himself flourished under Muhammad-bin-Tughlak whom he outlived by several years. Barani named his work *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi*, after Firoz-Shah though the actual history of Firoz Shah forms not more than a fifth part of the whole. His history is a chronological account of the reigns of the Delhi Sultans from Balban to Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq. He has devoted much space and time to Balban and Alauddin. His account of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq's reign is confusing. Besides narrating the political history, Barani describes many more factors like the administrative regulations, the frequency of Mongol invasions, the expeditions to South India, Alauddin's tariff legislation, Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq's token currency and others. Barani knew the value of history and was fully aware of the duties and responsibilities of a historian. He gives expression to his critical faculty in his observations, and says, 'I took care to sift the matters, and to distinguish between fabrication and reality.' 'To be honest,' he continues, 'in observing incidents, and in chronicling them as such is the most essential duty of a historian.' He knew also how necessary it was for a historian to be free from religious bigotry. He knew also the value of truth in matters of historical investigation. 'I, the compiler of the *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi*,' says he, 'have in my preface made this pledge that whatever I shall write in this history shall be the whole truth. Of the persons whose history I relate I shall mention both good and bad actions. To publish men's good actions and to conceal their bad is what I shall not do; for if I should carelessly overlook (their bad actions) and recount simply their excellent deeds, and shut my eyes to the evil, then my writings would be lowered in the (auspicious) eyes of my readers; and I myself will stand charged before the Tribunal of God.'

On the whole he is an impartial historian, giving attention to the good and evil of historical personages. But his work is singu-

larly devoid of order and arrangement. It is without paragraphs and the subject is divided under different headings. He was also careless of dates and chronology. He is 'an unmethodical writer with no taste for chronology.' He died in extreme poverty.

The Bibliotheca Indica edition of this work has been checked with the manuscripts in the British Museum and the India Office.

A famous Moorish traveller of the time is Ibn Batuta (1304-1378), a Doctor of Law, native of Morocco. He started on his travels in 1325 and during the next eight years visited Arabia, Persia and reached India in 1333. Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq appointed him Qazi of Delhi, which office he held about eight years. After having toured the different States in India, he returned to Morocco in 1353. Here at the instance of Sultan Abu Inan, Ibn Batuta dictated the experiences of his journey to Abu Abdullah Muhammad-bin-Muhammad, commonly known as Ibn Juzai, who edited them as the 'Rihla' (Journal). Ibn Batuta died at the age of 73 (1377-78).

Ibn Batuta ranks higher than Barani in the matters of qualification and historical investigation. He was a doctor of law and theology. He also possessed greater advantages than Barani for getting accurate information about facts. His account of the Delhi Sultanate from Kutb-ud-din Aibak to Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq is largely a result of his experiences and acquaintances in India except the part relating to the latter sovereign. His reliability is beyond question as far as his personal knowledge of men and things is concerned. His account of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq corroborates the picture depicted by Barani who, however, was less learned than the foreigner. His account is a valuable supplement to the indigenous sources.

Among writers of other historical prose the most distinguished were Minhāj-us-Siraj, author of *Tabakat-i-Nasiri* and Shams-i-Siraj Afif who continued Barani's *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi*, besides Ghulam Yahya bin-Ahmad, author of the simple and elegant *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi* and other writers. These historical works enable us to have a glimpse of the achievements of Firoz-Shah Tughlak and his times. For other chronicles of the Turkish period, the reader may be referred to Mahdi Hussain's Muhammad-bin-Tughlak (London 1938)—Appendix. Now let us turn to the historical works that were produced in South India, in the early middle ages.

The *Futuh-us-Salatin* by Isami is the only extant contemporary work on the history of the Bahmani Kingdom. The author was the grandson of an old *sipah salar* Isami who was compelled by Sultan Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq to leave Delhi for Daulatabad in 1327 A.D., the grand-father died on the way, but young Isami made his home there. He attached himself to the first Bahmani Sultan, began to write his work in 1358 and completed it in the next year. Modelled on the *Shah Nama* of Firdausi, the work is written in limpid verse and narrates the history of the Sultanate of Delhi to the time of Muhammad-bin-Tughlak. It then gives a vivid picture of the years of political turmoil in the Deccan which preceded the foundation of the Bahmani kingdom, besides much valuable and accurate information on the Muslim conquest of the Deccan and South India and on the reign and character of the first Bahmani Sultan. Other works on the Bahmani Kingdom were late compositions written long after the extinction of the Sultanate and from the particular stand-point of one or other of the succession States. Notable among them is the *Burhan-i-maasir* of Ali bin Aziz-ullah Taba Tabai of Simmin (Persia)—a contemporary of the more famous Ferishta, and like him at first a courtier of the Nizam Shah's kingdom of Ahamadnagar. Little is known of the life and activities of Taba Tabai ; he began his history in 1591 and completed it in the next five years. It is a history of the Nizam Shahs to which is prefixed an account of the Bahmani Sultans as an introduction. His bias in favour of his patrons is evident throughout his narrative ; but in some respects his statements seem to be more authentic than those of Ferishta and better in accord with the evidence from coins. But beyond a shadow of doubt Ferishta is the Prince of Muslim historians of the period. The wide range and sweep of his work which forms a general history of Muslim rule in India, the number of authorities he consulted, and the general sense of perspective that dominates the entire narration impart a monumental character to his history. Covering wide ground, and often at second hand, he is sometimes inaccurate in detail ; writing in the court of the Adil Shahis of Bijapur at the instance of Ibrahim II, he narrates Deccan affairs in a way that puts his patrons in the most favourable light. There is no doubt that this history, finished in 1606, is the most comprehensive and readable account of Indian Islam. A Persian by birth, Muhammad Khasim Hindu Shah Ferishta came to Ahamad-

nagar with his father at the age of 12 in 1582. The father became tutor to a Nizam Shahi prince, but died soon after. Young Ferishta took to a military career, but a palace revolution deprived him of his position as captain of the King's guard. Being a Shiah and having few friends at Ahamadnagar, he migrated to Bijapur where he obtained an appointment in the army. We do not know how and when he changed the sword for the pen and found his true vocation.

The history of Ferishta agrees largely with that of Taba Tabai. He narrates the relations of the Deccan Muslim power with Vijayanagar from the beginning; sometimes confuses the names of the Vijayanagar rulers and confounds them with those of the generals and viceroys of the kingdom. The true greatness of Krishnadevaraya cannot be inferred from Ferishta's history. His account of the battle of Talikota is also one-sided. He conceals the treachery of two Muslims which caused the defeat of Vijayanagar rulers, a point frequently alluded to by foreigners like Caesar Frederic and others.

The history of Ferishta has been rendered into English by J. Briggs under the title of *The History of the Rise of the Muhammadan Power in India*—4 vols.

Another work, also written from the stand-point of Bijapur, is the *Tazkirat-ul-muluk* by a Persian merchant from Shiraz, known as Shirazi on that account. His business brought him to Sagar on the Krishna in 1560, and he entered Adil Shahi service in 1574. He wrote his work between the years 1608 and 1610; apparently of not much value for Bahmani affairs, it is a contemporary account of some aspects of Bijapur history giving many details not otherwise known. Of the four historians noticed here, three came directly from Persia and all of them wrote in Persian, signal proof of the great influence of Persia on Indo-Muslim culture. The history of Wassaf, completed in 1328, deals with the Mongols in Persia, and contains numerous references to Indian affairs.

For the study of Vijayanagar empire in South India, by a happy conjunction of circumstances, much valuable information of a trustworthy character has come down to us. The Inscriptions of the emperors and their subordinates, contemporary writers both native and foreign, Mussalman historians, Hindu chroniclers and the compilers of the village Kaviles and Kaifiyats furnish the historian amply with information about the role of the empire in

South India. The only thing which the historian has to do is to arrange the facts in their proper setting so that their true significance may be seen clearly. Considerable advance has been made in the field of Vijayanagar History since Robert Sewell wrote his pioneer work '*A Forgotten Empire*' (1901). Works of general literature and chronicles have been critically studied and edited; inscriptions and coins have been catalogued and published; monuments have been surveyed and explained with proper historical background. So when we come to this period, the difficulty lies not in the dearth of sources, but rather in the opposite one of being overwhelmed by a mass of material. The foreign evidences which are generally found in Portuguese, Dutch, French and English languages increase in number and became more and more copious. They have been generally published with excellent aids by way of notes and introductions in the publications of the Hakluyt Society, the Broadway Travellers series and elsewhere. Only parts of them have been published and annotated. The literary evidences may be conveniently divided into two parts : (1) The indigenous literature, (2) The foreign evidences. The indigeneous literature may further be divided into chronicles, works of general literature, administrative records, commonly known as *Kaifiyats* and so on. Among the chronicles, The *Kalajnanas* occupy a primary place. These *Kalajnanas*, worthless though they seem, because they pretend to be prophecies of the future by inspired seers, and though they exaggerate many things, offer sometimes very striking clues to the real course of history. The *Vidyaranya Kalajnana*, composed before the close of the 15th century, describes within a brief compass the history of the kings of Vijayanagara and throws some welcome light on the dark corners of Vijayanagar history. The *Vidyaranya Vrittanta* describes the circumstances under which the kingdom of Vijayanagara was founded. The mnemonic verse which occurs in almost all these *Kalajnanas* is very useful in elucidating the early history of the empire. Working merely by the light of epigraphy without the aid of the clue given by this verse, scholars have fallen into a number of errors with regard to the history of the 'first dynasty' which might have been avoided if this verse had been taken into account. It strings together the first letters of the names of monarchs that came in succession, and that is the importance of the verse. By following its order you are able to arrange the epigraphical evidence much better than has so far

been possible. The *Kamparaya Carita*, the *Saluvabhyudaya*, the *Raya-vacaka*, the *Krishnaraya Vijaya*, the *Varadambika Parinaya*, the *Acyuta Rayabhyudaya*, the *Raghunathabhyudaya* and the *Sahityaratnakara* belong to this class. Of much less literary value, and in no way more dependable is the Tamil chronicle of *Kongudesarajakkalin-Carittiram* or the history of the kings of the Kongu country. This is another chronicle which has been on the whole over-rated by students of South Indian History. In some parts it is indeed useful. But it pretends to give us a systematic chronology which it is very difficult to fit into the definitely known facts of South Indian History.

The *Keladinripa Vijaya* is a Kanarese chronicle in prose and verse treating of the chiefs of Keladi. They were also known as the Nayaks of Ikkeri or Bednur as they shifted their capital during the later years of their rule. It was probably written by a Brahmin poet called Linganna who seems to have flourished about the middle of the 18th century. The work has not yet been translated into any other language. It offers much new information about the gradual expansion of Bijapur into Karnataka. It throws light on the foundation of the Maratha dominion in South India. This is a post-Vijayanagar Chronicle.

We have other chronicles still—the *Karnatakarajakkal Savistara Caritai* is a fairly longish account running into several hundreds of pages; it was compiled by a certain writer by name Narayana, for the benefit of Col. Mackenzie when he started bringing together a magnificent collection of antiquities, literary, epigraphical, artistic and so on. This is also a post-Vijayanagar chronicle. The *Karnataka Rajakkal Savistra Caritai* is quite good on recent history, on the history of the European companies and their struggles for supremacy in South India. Then we have a chronicle poem in the *Velugoti Vari Vamsavali*, which has been critically studied and recently published in a practically definitive edition by Dr. N. Venkataramanayya. We find that this chronicle has unusual historical value and the amount of history that can be got from it is certainly much greater than from many other works of that character.

Works of general literature often contain data of great value to the student of history. The establishment of the new Hindu Kingdom of Vijayanagar coincided with a period of literary revival; and a large volume of literature was produced under the

aegis of the Rayas. The commentaries, *Kavyas*, dramas, farces and so on contain valuable historical accounts of the kind. Madhava, Sayana, Madhava mantrin, and other commentators describe the origin of the Sangama family and the rule of the early Rayas. The *Kumara Ramana Kathe*, a poem written in the 16th century A.D. furnishes us some valuable information on the condition of South India on the eve of the establishment of the Vijayanagar empire. Lakshmana Pandita, the court physician of Bukka II, narrates at length the history of his patron's family in the introduction of his *Vaidyaraja Vallabham*, a treatise on the Ayurveda. Lakshminarayana relates briefly the story of the Tuluva kings and enumerates the victories of his patron Krishnadevaraya in his *Sangitasuryodayam*, a work on music. The Gajapati king Pratapa-rudra gives a short account of his family history in the introduction to his *Sarasvativilasam*, a book on law.

It is in the field of Vernacular literature, especially Telugu, that this species of historical composition is perfected. The historical introduction made its first appearance in Telugu as early as the age of the Chalukyas; but it did not come into vogue until much later. Tikkana who lived during the later half of the 13th century A.D. is the first Telugu poet to trace the history of his patron's family in the prologue of his poems. He gives a succinct account of the Nellore branch of the Telugu Choda family in the introduction to his *Nirvacanottara Ramayanam*. This plan soon acquired considerable popularity, and an introduction describing the history of the patron's family became a normal feature of the literary works of this age. The example of Tikkana was followed by all the subsequent Telugu poets so effectively that Telugu literature has become one of the principal sources of Vijayanagara History. The earliest Telugu writer who was associated with the Rayas was the poet Nachana Somana who lived at the court of Harihara I. Unfortunately the early books of his poem *Harivamsa* have not come down to us; and it is not possible to discover what he said about the history of his patron's family. Vallabharaya, who was a subordinate of Harihara II, gives some interesting information in his *Kridabhiramam* about Bukka I and Harihara II; Jakkana refers to the activities of Devaraya I in his *Vikramarka Caritra*; Srinatha, the *vidhyadhikari* at the court of Pedakomati Vema and the author of many of Vema's inscriptions, gives an excellent account of the Reddi kings in the introductions to his *Kasikhandam*

and *Bhimakhandam*; besides, his *catus* contain vignettes of the social life of the citizens of the empire and of the court during the time of Devaraya II. Pina Virabhadra, Singaya and Mallaya, Peddana, Timmana, Krishnaraya and Konerinatha describe the history of the Saluvas, Tuluvas and Aravidu kings in the introductions to their respective poems.

Another kind of historical composition which stands between the *prasastis* in inscriptions and the chronicles is the *biruda-gadya* which the *vandis* and the *magadhas* recited every morning at the palaces of the kings. It consists of a string of phrases describing in highly eulogistic terms the achievements of kings and nobles. The members of the *Bhat* community held the monopoly of reciting the *biruda-gadyas* in South India, and exercised a good deal of influence on the growth of historical literature. The medieval *prasasti* writers not only based their compositions on the material furnished by the *biruda-gadyas*, but frequently adopted even the language of the *Bhats*. One interesting feature of the *biruda-gadya* is that it grew with the passage of time. It passed on from generation to generation, gathering mass, absorbing new titles, so that the *biruda-gadya* of the last king of any dynasty attributed to him all the titles of his predecessors. If the *Bhats* confined their attention only to the composition of these *gadyas*, the chronicle would not have come into existence at all. Besides the *biruda-gadyas*, they composed verses eulogising the glory of their patrons. These verses, which were composed for the occasion, were preserved carefully and tacked on to the *biruda-gadyas* on which they serve as a metrical commentary. As each generation made its own contribution, the *biruda-gadya* was transformed into a chronicle within the course of a few generations. Although every noble family must have had its own chronicle, only a few survived. The most important of them are the *Ramarajiyam*, the *Arvitivamsa Caritram*, *Cikkadevaraya Vamsavali*. The *Ramarajiyam* describes the history of the Aravidu family from the time of the Chalukyas of Kalyani to the middle of the 17th century, when the empire of Vijayanagara finally disappeared. It preserves the distinctive character of the two elements, the *biruda-gadya* and the eulogistic verse, the combination of which produced the chronicle, yet from the stand-point of the evolution of historical literature, it must be regarded as later; for, it is the composition of a single writer, Audugula Venkayya, who attempted to introduce some sort of unity into the

loosely connected material. The *Aravitivamśa Caritram* which traces the history of the Avuku branch of the Aravidu family presents another stage in the growth of the chronicle. The *biruda-gadya* completely drops out of it. This is probably due to an accident. The *Aravitivamsa Caritram* is not an independent work; it is tacked on as an appendix to Konerinatha's poem, the *Dvipada Balabhagavatam*. Probably the author consciously made an innovation in the method of writing the chronicle. Whatever be the circumstances in which the change was introdueed, there need be no doubt about the result. It gave the Hindu chronicle its final shape. The *Keladi-nripa Vijayam*, already described, however betrays no traces of the *biruda-gadya*. It is a typical chronicle in prose and verse, approximating very nearly to the Muhammadan historical works in verse.

One other chronicle, which is later than the above works, may also be considered. This is the *Ramarajna-Bakhair* which is included in the Mackenzie collection. It describes the events connected with the disastrous battle of Rakshasi-Tangadi which opened the flood-gates of the Mussalman invasion on South India. This chronicle furnishes us with the Hindu version of the great battle and enables us to investigate the problem afresh. Two versions of the chronicle—one in Marathi and the other in Kannada—are extant. One appears to be a translation of the other, although it is not easy to determine which of the two works is the original. It purports to be the account of an eye-witness. The minute description of the contending armies, and their movements on the battle field, and the graphic narration of the progress of events seem to bear out this claim; but it has several defects of a serious nature. The inclusion of the emperor Akbar in the confederacy of the Mussalman kings fighting against the Raya, and the introduction of a long passage enumerating the fictitious names of the most important of the 64 queens of the Raya make it obvious that the author of the *bakhair* could not have been a contemporary of Rama Raja, much less an eye-witness of the battle which saw his downfall. Probably, a genuine old chronicle was tampered with by a later redactor, who distorted it in his attempts to improve it, owing to ignorance. This supposition gives a satisfactory explanation of the intriguing problems with which the student of the chronicle is confronted.

Another species of historical literature grew up in South India, specially in the Telugu country, from the administrative

records maintained in the villages. These records known as *danda-kaviles* or *kaviles* are village registers containing information about the political, religious, social and economic conditions of the village. It remained in the custody of the village *karanam*, who could enter into it all important events concerning the village that happened during his time and pass it on to his successor. The *dandakavile* would thus grow in bulk from generation to generation, each generation making its own contribution to the history of the village. Col. Colin Mackenzie who was the first to recognize the value of these records sent into the villages his clerks with instructions to collect and copy them. The clerks whom he despatched in this manner collected several of these *danda-kaviles*, and copied every inscription in the villages whether on stone or copper ; but in many cases, either because they could not induce the *karanams* to part with their *kaviles* or because they considered the original not worth copying, they prepared digests of the village registers. These digests are usually known as *Kaifiyats* and they yield much information of value.

The *danda-kaviles* and the *kaifiyats* contain, as is to be expected in records of this description, an admixture of legend and history. The legendary element predominates in the accounts of the early period ; but it leaves the later history comparatively free. The *danda-kaviles* are usually silent about the administration of the early dynasties such as the Satavahanas and the Pallavas. Occasionally they break the silence, only to treat us to a description of the miraculous birth of some forgotten king or the foundation of some vanished temple ; but as they approach our own times they free themselves from mythology and grow more and more accurate and trustworthy ; though they give only a hazy and not very accurate account of the Chalukyas and the Cholas, they become fuller and more precise in describing the history of the Kakatiyas, and their account of the Reddis of Kondavidu, the Rayas of Vijayanagar, and the Gajapatis of Orissa is very nearly accurate, and occasionally they even furnish us with the key to the solution of some problem on which the inscriptions throw little or no light. But these works must be used with great caution, as fact and fiction are sometimes found in them inextricably mixed together.

Foreign sources. Notices of India by foreign travellers are often both instructive and interesting. While dealing with the

foreign sources of Ancient India, we have seen how the references of Greek and Roman writers to India gain in extent and accuracy to the end of 2nd cent. A.D. Then we have seen how the Itineraries of Chinese Travellers and the chronicles of annalists throw light on the social and economic conditions of the time. We have also seen how from eighth century onwards the writings of Arab merchants and travellers, historians and geographers begin to be important, and the Chinese sources become more copious and definite than before.

The illustrious Alberuni marks the transition from Ancient to Medieval times. He was followed by Abulfeda (1273-1331), Ibn Said (1214-1286) and Ibn Batuta. The writings of these early Medieval Arab historians and geographers furnish valuable evidences on the political, social and economic conditions of the times.

To turn lastly to the European travellers in India after Cosmas, it has been doubted if the Jewish traveller from Spain, Benjamin of Tudela (1170) ever visited India, though he has some interesting remarks to offer on Quilon and its trade. With Marco Polo, 'the prince of medieval travellers,' begins a new epoch in the direct contacts between Europe and the East. He reached the court of Kublai Khan after a hazardous journey of three and half years across Asia. He spent seventeen years in the Mongol court where he became a favourite of the Khan and was employed on many important missions. Finally he was chosen to escort a princess of the Khan's family on her bridal journey to the ruler of Persia. He left China in 1292 and his voyage to Persia through the Indian seas lasted about a year and a half. Thence he travelled to Constantinople and returned to Venice finally in 1295. He was only passing through some parts of South India on his way to Persia, but the amount of information he was able to collect is indeed surprising. His veracity and justness of observation were doubted for a long time, but this is no longer so. He has much to tell on the manners, beliefs and practices of the people of South India and on their maritime trade. 'The commerce of India he found stretching, like an immense chain, from the territories of Kublai Khan to the shores of the Persian Gulf and of the Red Sea. He found the shores and the islands of the Indian sea luxuriantly covered with nature's choicest products......He tells us of the topaz, the amethyst, and the emerald, of the sapphires of Ceylon, and the diamonds of Golconda.'

Morco Polo has stood the test of time as few travellers who have travelled so widely and written upon so many matters have done. There are two recent versions in English of his travels (1) Prof. Ricci's (ed. Sir Denison Ross) in the Broadway Travellers' series and (2) Marco Polo—the Description of the World by A. C. Moule and Paul Pelliot. If the Venetian merchant represents one side of the culture-contacts between the West and East, the three monks who visited South India soon after Marco Polo represent another. First among them was the Franciscan friar, John of Monte Corvino, who travelled in 1292-3 by way of India to China to preach the gospel in the vast land of Paganism and what he considered little better, Nestorianism. This lonely monk was out of sympathy with much that he saw in India, and with him may be said to begin the stream of Christian missionary criticism of Indian life and habits which has not always been either intelligent or charitable. Nearly 30 years later came Friar Odoric of Pordenone who reached India soon after 1321. He travelled along the west coast, visited Ceylon and went up to the shrine of St. Thomas in 'Mailapore.' His account of some Hindu customs and practices is obviously that of an eye-witness. Lastly we have Friar Jordanns who may have reached India a little before Odoric; in his writings he holds out to his brother friars in Europe the prospect of extensive missionary work in the East. His mention of the Parsis and their mode of exposing the dead is among the earliest notices of this community in India. He was appointed Bishop of Columbum (Quilon) in 1328, but it is not known if he actually took charge of the office. Yet another monk, John of Marignolli, a native of Florence, deserves a passing mention; he went out to China by land, like Marco Polo, as Papal legate to the court of the Great Khan; he left China by sea from the celebrated port of Zayton in 1346 and reached Quilon where he spent some time before setting sail for the Coromandel coast to visit the shrine of St. Thomas. He also spent some time in Ceylon and gives an interesting account of the Buddhist monks of the island.

The rise of Vijayanagar in the fourteenth century and of the Portuguese power in the east a little later attracted many foreigners to India, and as a consequence foreign evidence on South India increases vastly in volume, variety and interest. We cannot possibly go over all this evidence here, but must confine our attention to those sections of it which are of particular value to us.

R. H. Major's *India in the fifteenth century* contains a good collection of the texts of these foreign travellers who visited India in the 15th century. The earliest European visitor to Vijayanagar whose account has come down to us is the Italian Nicolo Conti who came to the City in 1420 or 1421. He was a Venetian of noble family, who, when a young man, resided as a merchant in the city of Damascus, whence he started on this travels to the East, though in what year is not precisely known. He passed through Persia, sailed along the coast of Malabar, visited some parts of the interior of Hindustan, and also of the islands of Ceylon, Sumatra and Java. He returned to Venice in 1444 after twenty-five years of absence. He wrote nothing himself, but narrated his experiences to a papal secretary who wrote them down in Latin for his master's information ; this was translated into Portuguese and from Portuguese into Italian. The original Latin version is not extant.

The first Indian city which Conti visited was Cambaya where he notices the number of precious stones called sardonixes and also the prevalence of the custom of Suttee. At a distance of three hundred miles inland he comes to the great city of Vijayanagar, the capital of the great Hindu Kingdom of Medieval South India. Conti gives a description of the Vijayanagar court and its festivals, its currency and other matters. His description of Mailapur, the burial place of St. Thomas, is also interesting.

At about the same time, there came to Vijayanagar the Persian Ambassador Abdur Razzak, sent on an important mission to the Zamorin by Shah Rukh. He sailed to Calicut from Ormuz in 1442 and did not much like that city. His stay was cut short by a message from the Raja of Vijayanagar asking that he should be sent on to the capital without delay. Abdur Razzak went to Vijayanagar by way of Mangalore, was well received and witnessed the Mahanavami festival. He emphasises the king's absolute power and his high esteem for Brahmans and the administrative activity of 'Danaik.' Besides a splendid description of the City of Vijayanagar, his narrative supplies valuable information on the topography, administration and social life of the Hindu kingdom of South India in the 15th century. Later some jealous merchants from Ormuz cast doubts on his credentials with the result that the ambassador came to be treated with less consideration than before ; he left Vijayanagar for Mangalore towards the end of 1443, and Mangalore for Persia early in 1444. The record of his

mission is the testimony of a trained official on the state of administration and society at the time. The most satisfactory description of the work, however, will be found in the elaborate article by M. Quatremere, in the fourteenth volume of the *Notices et Extraits des Manuscripts*, which comprises a great portion of the life of Shah Rukh, and the text, accompanied by a version in French, of two other extracts from Abdur Razzak's history, relating respectively to the voyage of the ambassador of Shah Rukh to China and to that of Abdur Razzak himself to India ; the latter R. H. Major has rendered into English with notes in his *India in the* 15*th century*.

The Russian trader Athanasius Nikitin spent some years in the Deccan round about 1470 and travelled in the Bahmani kingdom which he entered by way of Chaul. His observations give details of the court, the army, and the condition of the people under Bahmani rule. With the beginning of 16th century the foreign evidences become voluminous. This particular century witnessed some mighty rulers like Krishnadeva Raya, Rama Raya and Venkatapati Raya. The last sovereign may be regarded as the last flicker of the empire of Vijayanagar. The Portuguese established their commercial ascendancy in South India in the 16th century. A stream of Italian travellers, traders, and jewellers visited India and have left valuable accounts of what they saw and heard in different parts of the country.

Ludovico di Varthema of Bologna, an Italian gentleman and soldier who was eventually knighted by the Portuguese, travelled in India during the years between 1502 and 1508, and has left behind a vivid record of his experiences. His credibility was doubted for a long time, but wrongly. His account of Goa and Calicut and other ports of the west coast and of the effects on them of the advent of the Portuguese and his description of the city and empire of Vijayanagar, contain much that is interesting and valuable. Friar Luis, who was sent to that city by Albuquerque in 1510 elucidates the war-like activities of Krishnadeva Raya before his war with Orissa.

The Portuguese Duarte Barbosa served the government of his country in India, from 1500 to about 1516 ; he knew the Malayalam language very well and 'spoke it better than the natives of his country.' He was *feitor* (factor) in Cannanore in 1502, and acted an interpreter between Francisco Albuquerque and the king of Cannanore in 1503. He was valued as a writer

by Gaspar Correa, and was employed by Albuquerque for his ability, though he did not support the policy of developing Goa at the expense of Cochin and Cannanore. Barbosa returned to Portugal between 1517 and 1518 and then gave the final touches to his narrative which covers much wider ground than the sphere of his official activities and includes a full description of Vijayanagar.

Longworth Dames, the editor of Barbosa describes the value of the book in the following words :

'The value of Barbosa's work at the present day is principally geographical and ethnographical. Some of his historical references are of considerable importance, but, as he has distinctly stated himself his object was not to write a history, but to describe the people and the country and its products. In these respects he stands almost alone in his period, and his accounts are extremely accurate in many respects and show great powers of observation. This applies more especially to the South of India, where his long residence and his knowledge of one at least of the languages (Malayalam) gave him an understanding of the people, of which we find few traces among the writers of that period.' (*The book of Duarte Barbosa* by Longworth Dames, Intro. I, VIII). The work of Duarte Barbosa has been rendered into English from the Portuguese manuscript by Longworth Dames in 2 Vols. under the title of *The Book of Duarte Barbosa* and by Lord Stanley under the title of *A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar in the beginning of the sixteenth century by Duarte Barbosa*, both for the Hakluyt Society.

The value of other Portuguese writers for the history of the sixteenth century has been sufficiently recognised since Sewell emphasized it generally in *A Forgotten Empire* (1901) which included translations of the chronicles of Domingos Paes (1520-2) and of Fernao Nuniz, a horse-dealer who spent three years in Vijayanagar (1535-37), besides part of letter written from Cochin by Manuel Barradas (12th December 1616) giving an account of the origin and course of the civil war then in progress in the kingdom of Vijayanagar. The Chronicle of Nuniz, composed in 1537, incorporating the information gathered by him about the rulers of Vijayanagar from the foundation of the city, has invested the most significant period of Vijayanagar history with flesh and blood. Krishnadeva Raya lives in the pages of history as no other ruler does, thanks to these two Portuguese travellers ; neither the

Mussalman historians nor the inscriptions of that emperor exceeding 300, not even the contemporary indigenous literature, could substantiate his unique role in South Indian History. Caesar Frederic, who visited Vijayanagar, a couple of years after the battle of Talikota comments on the ruined greatness of the Imperial City. Ralph Fitch who spent the years 1583-91 in India, Nicolas Pimenta, visitor of the Jesuits in India at the close of the sixteenth century, the Dutch traveller John Huighen Van Linschoten (1583) are other writers who have their own contribution to make to our knowledge of South India in their days. The contemporary Jesuit letters from South India often embody passing but vivid references to political events of the early seventeenth century. The affairs and trade of the kingdom of Golconda and the port of Masulipatam at that time receive much elucidation from the writings of the Dutch factor Schorer (1615) and the English factor William Methwold (1618-22) which have been edited by Moreland together with another Dutch account, anonymous, dating from about the same time.

Besides being indispensable to elucidate the administration and social life of South India in Medieval times, the accounts of these foreign travellers throw light on the fortunes of the Portuguese power in India. Moreover, the Portuguese were fortunate in their historians during the sixteenth century, and the works of Joao de Barros, Gaspar Correa, Couto and F.L. de Castanheda are unequalled among the works of that period. 'De Barros is the classical authority on the subject, and his full and comprehensive survey will always retain its value as a philosophical history containing the fullest summary of the geographical facts possible at the time, and also as a fine example of literary style.' (Longworth Dames, *The Book of D. Barbosa,* Intro. XX). Correa and Castanheda are to be valued rather for their accurate accounts of events which came under their personal observation, as they were acquainted with India. Garcia de Orta, though not historical, can be grouped with the above writers as a supplementary to their accounts. *The Commentaries of Albuquerque* ed. by Birch 4 Vols. 1875-83 for the Hakluyt Society also throw some valuable light on the early history of 16th century South India.

Archaeological Sources. Besides these Persian and foreign evidences, we also find the evidence of inscriptions, coins and monuments to be useful in elucidating and reconstructing the

history of Medieval India. But they are few and scattered when compared to the volume of indigenous Persian chronicles and foreign writings. Some of these inscriptions have been well studied and edited by a band of scholars, Indian and foreign, in volumes of Epigraphia Indica and Indo-Moslemica. They throw some light on the achievements of the sultanates also. The study of coins of these sultanates is interesting as well as instructive. Almost all the sultanates issued gold currencies after the Persian model. They have been studied and well catalogued by eminent numismatists like Lane-Poole, Nelson Wright, Richard Burn and Taylor. They supplement and corroborate the literary and epigraphical evidences.

The Mughul Period

The Mughul period forms one of the most glorious chapters in the annals of medieval and modern India. It is also one of the best studied periods. No other period of Indian History is so rich in its sources as the age of Mughuls. Many of the Mughul emperors were themselves men of letters and have left us their records of the events of their reigns. The other members of the royal family have also written histories of their times. Moreover the Mughul rulers regularly maintained court historiographers and encouraged them to write the official histories of their times. The Mughul period is rich in foreign sources also. The coins, monuments and inscriptions also confirm the above literary sources.

Considerable advance has been achieved in the field of Mughul history by a hoast of scholars, both European and Indian, since the days of Elphinstone and Lane-Poole. The Persian works of historical literature have been edited with critical notes by Erskine, A. S. Beveridge, Elliot and Dowson and others. Excellent biographies have been brought out of the dominant rulers of the period. The adventurous life of Babar has been critically studied by S. M. Edwards, Rushbrook Williams and Lane-Poole ; Dr. S. K. Banerjee's *Humayun Badshah* (O.U.P. 1938) in two volumes is one of the best accounts of the unfortunate life of Humayun. K. R. Quanungo's *Sher Shah* (Calcutta 1921) is a careful and well written life of the famous Afghan ruler of India in the 16th century based on the various Persian authorities dealing with the period. V.A. Smith's *Akbar the Great Mogul* (Oxford 1917) and the interesting little book of Lawrence Binyon on *Akbar* (London 1939) provide

comprehensive and penetrating surveys of the achievements of Akbar. Beni Prasad's *History of Jahangir* (2nd ed. 1930) is an exhaustive and critical study from all sources. Pages 441-77 give a detailed Bibliography. He says about European accounts in general, 'Their unfamiliarity with the country and its politics, their ignorance of Persian, their prejudices and their credulity made it impossible for them rightly to interpret what they saw.' (p.455). Maclagan's *The Jesuits and the Great Mogul*, Ch. V. p. 69-92, deals with the Jesuits as well as other Europeans at the court of Jahangir Dr. Banarsi Prasad Saxena's *History of Shahjahan of Delhi* (Allahabad 1932) is a most welcome addition to the critical monographs that have recently appeared on the lives of the Mughul emperors. Sir Wolseley Haig, in his foreword to the book, writes : 'Saksena treats his subject with praiseworthy impartiality. Shahjahan, in his hands, is not "The virtuous sovereign with hardly a blemish on his character" depicted by contemporary Indian chroniclers, nor on the other hand, is he the monster of moral depravity described by some European travellers who have flavoured their pages with scandalous gossip of the purlieus of the court.' Pages I-XXX contain a critical discussion of the sources, Persian and European. There is also a classified Bibliography at the end of the book p. 345-49. L.S. Jast's *Shahjahan* (London, 1934), with all its inaccuracies, is an interesting contribution. K.R. Quanungo's *Dara Shukoh* (Calcutta, 1934) gives a critical account of the life of Dara Shukoh, the mystic philosopher prince of Medieval India. The long reign of Aurangzeb has received the attention of so many scholars. S. Lane-Poole's *Aurangzeb* (Rulers of India—O.U.P. 1930) is the most readable short account of the reign of Aurangzeb. Jadu Nath Sarkar's *History of Aurangzeb*, 5 vols. (M.C. Sarkar & Sons, Calcutta—1912-24) is a monumental work based on the various original sources not to be easily surpassed. An abridged edition of this, entitled *A short History of Aurangzeb* is also available (1930). The administrative institutions of the empire have been critically studied by J.N. Sarkar and S.M. Edwards. W.H. Moreland's, *From Akbar to Aurangzeb* (Macmillan, London 1923) describes the economic condition of India in the 17th century, mainly based on the evidences of the foreigners. The works of Prof. Sri Ram Sharma on the different aspects of Mughul rule in India form a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the period. His *Bibliography of Moghul India* (1942) calls for special notice.

The primary authorities for the history of the Mughuls are mostly literary, consisting mainly of indigenous Persian accounts —official and non-official, and autobiographical. Official histories and court bulletins abound in volume in this period. This extensive Persian historical literature can be supplemented by a large volume of observations on Mughul India by foreign travellers and to some extent by numismatic and monumental evidences. Among official histories, we possess accounts of the reigns of the emperors from Akbar to Bahadur Shah I. These were compiled by order, from the despatches, news-letters, treaties, orders and revenue returns preserved in the state archives of Delhi. Their value lies in their wealth of topographical information, dates and names of persons, their accuracy and minuteness of detail. The subject-matter in these official histories is arranged merely in chronological order with a dry succession of names, like a government gazette. But their value is unique to the historian. Though compiled from kings' point of view, these histories do not suppress any defeats suffered by the imperial army or any natural disturbance affecting any part of the empire. We can trace the major incidents stage by stage, day by day. On these official histories, S.R. Sharma's estimate is worth reproducing here: 'Drawing upon the accumulated mass of material to be found in the govermment archives and writing contemporaneously with the events, their works unfold a view of the history of the period which is very full, usually very accurate and always very vivid.' (*Moghul bibliography* —p. 27).

The *Akbar Nama* by Abul Fazl takes a high rank among the official histories of the period. Abul Fazl wrote under state patronage and hence had all the facilities the state could place at his disposal. He obtained material from the record office and from 'the old members of the illustrious family and the servants of the State.' Abul Fazl himself says, 'I examined both prudent, truth speaking old men and active minded, right-actioned young ones and reduced their statements to writing. The royal command was issued to the provinces that those who from old service remembered with certainty or with admixture of doubt, the events of the past, should copy out their notes and memoranda and submit them to Court.' Among the Mughul historians, Abul Fazl was the most gifted. The *Akbar Nama* was written at the instance of Akbar. Abul Fazl traces the ancestry of Akbar from

Timur and deals in detail with Humayun, and the history of Akbar's reign is particularly full. The narrative goes up to 1602 in which year Abul Fazl was assassinated at the instance of Prince Salim. The *Akbar Nama* is published in three volumes by the Asiatic Society of Bengal. It has been rendered into English by Henry Beveridge. A number of passages selected from all the three volumes can also be found in Elliot and Dowson's *History of India* Vol. VI pp. 21-146.

Ain-i-Akbari or Institutes of Akbar compiled by the same author as a result of seven years' labour gives a wonderful survey of Akbar's empire. Its originality and historical value are high. V.A. Smith rightly observes : ' Even in Europe it would be difficult to find an authoritative compilation of a like kind until quite recent times . . . . Abul Fazl is entitled to the gratitude of later ages for the industry and skill with which he handled his embarrassing mass of material' (*Akbar, The Great Moghul*—p. 4). The *Ain-i-Akbari* (Vol. I) is translated from the original Persian by Blochman and the second and third volumes by H.S. Jarrett for the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

Jahangir gave his patronage to the completion of a valuable dictionary called the *Furhang-i-Jahangiri* and the composition of historical works continued in his reign. Among the many valuable histories produced under Shah-Jahan and Aurangzeb, special mention must be made of the *Padshah-Nama* of Abdul Hamid and *Alamgir-Nama* of Muhammad Kazim.

Emperor Shah Jahan wanted to have a grand history of his reign compiled on the lines and written in the style of Abul Fazl's *Akbar-Nama*. Sadullah Khan recommended Abdul Hamid as the proper man in that age capable of performing such a task, because he enjoyed among his contemporaries great reputation as a successful imitator of Abul Fazl's inimitable Persian prose style. Old Abdul Hamid who was in Patna was invited to the court in the second decade of Shah Jahan's reign and entrusted with the work. He lived to complete the first twenty years of the reign. The rest was completed by Hamid's pupil Muhammad Waris. He was stabbed to death by a mad student whom he kept with him.

The *Padshah-Nama* is the only detailed and the most authoritative history of the reign of Shah Jahan. The materials for this history, were drawn from state papers, news sheets, reports of daily occurrences at court and other official documents. This was read out to

the Emperor by his Wazir Sadullah Khan, and amended by him at the Emperor's suggestion. 'The *Padshah-Nama*, therefore, has also the merits and defects of an autobiography, so far as the character and doings of the Emperor are concerned. Shah Jahan's character is reflected in this court history, as he liked to portray himself' (Quanungo's *Dara Shukoh*—p. 405). The *Padshah-Nama* is also useful for the life of Dara Shukoh. *The Alamgir-Nama* by Muhammad Kazim, compiled in 1688, contains the history of first ten years of Aurangzeb's reign. The Emperor prohibited the continuation of this official history when the author presented it to him in the thirty-second year of his reign. All subsequent historians like Khafi Khan have profusely drawn upon it.

Among the non-official histories of the period, mention must be made of Gulbadan Begum's *Humayun-Nama*, Jauhar's *Tazkiratul-Waqiat*, Nizamuddin Ahmad's *Tabaqat-Akbari*, the *Tarikh-u-Shershahi* by Abbas, the *Tawarikh-i-Shahjahani* by Muhammad Sadiq and *Muntakhabu-l-Labab* of Khafi Khan. Nizamuddin Ahmad's *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* has a high place among the medieval histories of India. As pointed out by Dowson : 'It is one of the most celebrated histories of India and is the first that was composed upon a new model in which India alone forms the subject matter of the work, to the exclusion of the histories of other Asiatic countries. Both Ferishta and Shah Nawaz Khan, the author of the *Maasir-ul-umara*, have highly praised Nizamuddin's work . . According to Ferishta, 'of all the histories that he consulted, it is the only one he found complete.' Shah Nawaz says, 'This work cost the author much care and reflection in ascertaining facts and collecting materials and as Mir Masum Bhakkari and other persons of note afforded their assistance in the compilation, it is entitled to much credit.'

It is the general history of Muslim India which becomes fuller as it approaches the Mughul period. Nizam-ud-din was the military secretary of Akbar and knew him well. He is regarded as 'perhaps the best historian of the period' by W. Erskine. *The Tarikh-i-Badauni* is a general non-official history of the Islamic world including an account of Akbar's reign down to 1595. He freely criticises Akbar without any fear or favour. He is one of the orthodox historians of the period.

Muntakhabu-l-Lubab of Muhammad Hashim Khafi Khan is a well written history, 'commencing with the invasion of Babar,

1519, and concluding with the 14th year of the reign of Muhammad Shah.' The author's father was an officer under Murad Bakhsh. Khafi Khan himself conducted an embassy to Bombay in 1694. 'His reflective style, description of the condition of society, and characteristic anecdotes,' writes Prof. J.N. Sarkar, 'save his work from the dry formality of the court annals, and he is specially informing with regard to Deccan affairs.'

The work is frequently referred to as *Tarikh-i-Khafi Khan*. Khafi ('concealed') is supposed to have been the title wittily conferred by Muhammad Shah upon the writer, Muhammad Hashim Khwafi, for his having concealed his work for a long time (owing to Aurangzeb's prohibition of writing official histories). Others derive the word from *Khwaf* a district of Kuhrasan near Naishapur. The historian was made Diwan by Nizamul Mulk in the reign of Farrukh Siyar. Khafi Khan began his work in 1717, ten years after the death of Aurangzeb, as he himself seems to indicate in the introduction to the first volume and completed it in 1733, to which date he brings down his narrative in the second volume. Khafi Khan has certainly borrowed much from court chronicles like *Padshah-Nama*, as nobody can help it. He was the writer of the period to utilise the non-official sources like *Tarikh-i-Qandhari*, and herein lies the importance of his history. M. Elphinstone has based his narrative of Mughul history in his History of India, on the authority of Khafi Khan's book.

But the scientific historians cannot be satisfied with the above court chronicles and private histories, which are, after all, compilations. The historian naturally, wishes to go to their very source, to the raw-materials, out of which the above general works have been compiled. Moreover, these Persian histories are derivative by nature, as they were compiled from still earlier records or documents written immediately after the events described. To this latter class belong the voluminous collections of letters or the despatches of the provincial Governors and generals and the reports sent to court by newswriters and spies. The summaries of such of these despatches and reports as were read out before the emperors in the open court were preserved in the royal archives. These documents have been described as the 'Minutes of the Proceedings of the Mughul Emperor in Court.' The Mughul emperors maintained a set of professional clerks to take down these minutes of the proceedings of the court. As they were being

copied down, they became the *Akhbarat* or the News of the Imperial Court.

Notable among the letters written during the period were those of Abul Fazl and of emperor Aurangzeb. They were marked by elegance and ornate style and fanciful imagery and the letters of several writers like Jai Singh, Afzal Khan, Chandraban Brahman are still held as models. Even for the 18th century Mughul history, we have such *Akhbharats*. These news-letters of the Mughul period present the great historical events of the period in a new perspective and furnish a wealth of corroborative evidence. They shed exclusive light on a few contemporary occurrences. They are of immense value to a reconstruction of the social and general background of the period. Their chronology is highly dependable and will be found useful in checking up the dates of certain events on which other sources are not quite definite. 'In them we see events as they happened day by day, and not as they were dressed up afterwards by writers with a purpose. In them we see the actual hopes and fears, plans and opinions of those who made Indian history.' (J. N. Sarkar's *History of Aurangzeb*, p. XVI). Their form and manner of presenting historical material is quite distinctive.

The Royal Autobiographies also come to the aid of historians in the reconstruction of the history of the period. Some of the Mughul emperors were men of high literary standards and have left us their autobiographies. Among these, the *Tuzuk-e-Babari* and the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* form a separate class by themselves. The *Tuzuk-e-Babari* gives a true picture of its author and his achievement. Babur had 'a great love for nature, a trained eye for beauty in all its forms, and a scientific keen observation.' The result is the production of an autobiography which echoes the political career of Babur. 'Soldier of fortune as he was, Babur was not the less a man of fine literary taste and fastidious critical perception. In Persian, the language of culture, the Latin of Central Asia, as it is of India, he was an accomplished poet, and in his native Turki, he was master of a pure and unaffected style alike in prose and verse.. . . His battles as well as his orgies were humanized by a breath of poetry. . . . His memoirs contain the personal impressions and acute reflections of a cultivated man of the world, well-read in Eastern literature, a close and curious observer, quick in perception, a discerning judge of persons and a devoted lover of nature,—one moreover, who was well able to

express his thoughts and observations in clear and vigorous language .... The utter frankness and self-revelation, the unconscious portraiture of all his virtues and follies, his obvious truthfulness and fine sense of honour give the memoirs of this prince of auto-biographers an authority which is equal to their charm' (Lane-Poole). 'Babar's memoirs form one of the best and most faithful pieces of autobiography extant ; they are infinitely superior to the hypocritical revelations of Timur and the pompous declaration of Jahangir—not inferior in any respect to the expeditions of Xenophon and rank but little below the commentaries of Ceasar.'

Originally written by Babur in Turkish, the *Tuzuk-e-Baburi* was translated by Abdur Rahim into Persian under instructions from Akbar. Ilminsky published the Turkish text in 1857. It has been translated into English by Mrs. Beveridge.

The *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* or *the Memoirs of Jahangir* is of very great value as the personal memoirs of the Emperor, mostly written by himself during the first eighteen years of his reign and by Muhamad Khan, the Bakhshi, during the nineteenth regnal year. It provides detailed information on the personal lives of Jahangir and his nobles, with important occurrences in the empire. The imperial regulations are reproduced in full. Epidemics are described in great detail. Dowson speaks of it as a very rare work, almost unknown even in India itself. 'It is a plain and apparently ingenuous record of all that its author deemed worthy of note ; taken as a whole the work is very interesting, and assuming that Jahangir is mainly responsible for its authorship, it proves him to have been a man of no common ability. He records his weaknesses and confesses his great faults with candour, and a perusal of this work would leave a favourable impression both of his character and talents.' (Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI, pp. 284-391). The work has been translated into English by Rogers, the rendering being revised, edited and annotated by Henry Beveridge.

Foreign Sources. The next source of information concerning the Mughul period is to be found in the writings of the foreign travellers and merchants who visited and resided in the Mughul court. These foreigners were highly popular in India in the 16th and 17th centuries. They had sometimes access to the court and came in contact with influential Mughul Officers. They had ample opportunities to study the Indian conditions, manners and customs. Though these travellers could not understand the real significance

of Indian society and manners, yet their contributions have a value of their own and can by no means be ignored by Mughul historians.

The Jesuit records occupy the first place in volume and importance. These documents throw a welcome light on the life of Akbar and Jahangir. The Jesuit contact with Akbar began in 1580 A.D. and three missions were sent to his court from Goa. An account of the first mission was written in 1582 by Fr. Monserrate, a great scholar. Fr. Du Jarric, the French historian, published an account of the Jesuit missions in 1661, including the three missions to the great Mughul. Based on the original Jesuit letters, his work is of unsurpassed value for elucidating the religious activities of Akbar. 'The Fathers were highly educated men, trained for accurate observation and scholarly writing. They made excellent use of their opportunities at the Imperial court, and any book which professes to treat of Akbar while ignoring the indispensable Jesuit testimony must necessarily be misleading.' (V. A. Smith's *Akbar, The Great Moghul*—page 7). These Jesuit sources have been thoroughly studied by scholars like Father Hosten, Maclagan and V. A. Smith. John Correia-Affonso's *Jesuit letters and Indian History* (1955) is the latest production on the subject.

The observations of the foreign travellers throw a welcome light on the 17th century India. These European travellers came from different countries by different routes on diverse missions—some in quest of trade, others in search of a career, and yet others, a small minority, to seek diversion in new countries among new peoples with strange manners and peculiar customs. Some of these travellers received a warm reception at the hands of the Mughul Emperors. The travellers also were men of learning and culture, keen, shrewd and sympathetic observers and occupied a privileged position at the imperial court. Side by side with the Jesuit writings, the accounts of seven Englishmen, who travelled in Northern and Western India during the reigns of the Emperors Akbar and Jahangir, Ralph Fitch (1583-1591), John Mildenhall (1599-1606), William Hawkins (1608-13), William Finch (1608-11), Nicholas Withington (1612-16), Thomas Coryat (1612-1617), and Edward Terry (1616-19), though not designedly written for publication, have the great merit of 'naturalness of the narrative.' William Foster observes : 'Most of our travellers are seen, as it were, in

undress, and we learn more of their characters than we probably should, had they been conscious that they were addressing a wider audience.... For the travellers themselves one feels a genuine admiration. One and all, the men who here write their adventures so soberly and so modestly with many a shrewd observation and occasionally a flash of humour, ran daily great risks ; and in fact three of them found in the east their last resting-place, while a fourth died on the voyage home. Sickness, robbery, threats of violence were incidents that did not shake their cheerfulness, and there is little reflection in their narrative of the danger and hardships which were constantly their lot.' They had chosen to 'wander to the unfrequented yule, and they accepted the consequences, however unpleasant, stolidly and without repining' (*Early Travels in India* 1583-1619, ed. by Foster).* William Foster had done an yeomen service by editing and annotating the most important among these travel books.

Sir Thomas Roe was sent as an ambassador from King James to the court of Jahangir to secure the right of English merchants to participate in trade and to obtain necessary protection. His *Journal* is of unsurpassed value in shedding light upon the splendours of the royal court. 'But he was too shrewd to allow the pomp and glitter to blind him to the real state of the country, and he brings out clearly the darker shades of the picture.... He saw clearly, too, the forces which were making for disintegration ; and though "the time when all in these kingdoms will be in combustion" was not so near as he imagined, yet it was only postponed by the force of character of Shah Jahan and his still more capable son.' The Journal of Hawkins also is of inestimable value to know the political and economic conditions of 17th century India. The Journal of William Finch gives an excellent description of cities, towns, buildings and roads. De Laet's account of the topography of the Mughul empire is partly based on Finch. But his observations on Mughul politics are rather fanciful. The *Journal of John Jourdain*, edited by William Foster and published for the Hakluyt Society gives the commercial activities of the

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* Most of these seventeenth century travellers may be read in entirety in *Purchas, his pilgrims*, by Rev. Samuel Purchas (1625), enlarged from his earlier 'Purchas, his pilgrimage, or Relations of the World etc.' (1613). But the latest edition entitled 'Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas his pilgrims' was published by Mc Lehose in 1905.

English traders on the west coast, their relations with the Portuguese and their treatment by the local authorities, and the notices of the cities and towns through which the author passed in the second half of the 17th century. Terry's *Voyage* (Purchas Vol. IX pp.1-54 of reprint of 1777) is a useful supplement to Sir T. Roe's account of the life, character and policy of Jahangir. He also says something about the Jesuits and the Portuguese. But his observations on the manners and customs of the people are notable. The letters of Master Thomas Coryat give a glimpse of the personality and character of Jahangir.

Mention may be made of other European travellers like Francoys Pelsaert, De Laet, Pietro Della Valle, Sir Thomas Herbert, Johann Albert Von Mandelslo, Francois Bernier, Tavernier, Manucci, Thevenot and Careri. Their observations throw a flood of light on the different aspects of Mughul rule in India like the prohibition of slaughter of cows, freedom of conscience in the Mughul dominions, the festival of Nauroz and weighing ceremony, the skill of Indian barbers in massage, elephant fights, the orderliness in the Mughul camp and the defects in the military system of the Mughuls.

De Laet's *Description of India and Fragment of Indian History* 1625* 'is a complete gazetteer of Jahangir's India. Although it is a compilation, it is a faithful and reliable compilation.' (Banerjee). The account of Jahangir's reign in the 'Fragmentum' agrees substantially with the Persian Histories. Francoys Pelsaert's *Remonstrance* is the account of a Dutch factor who was in India for seven years (1620-27). His observations on Shah Jahan are valuable. He describes Agra, Lahore, Kashmir and other towns which he actually visited. His remarks about the district courts and the prohibition of the slaughter of cows are interesting.

Pietro Della Valle (1623-1627), an Italian traveller, has been described as the most eminent among those who travelled for pleasure, with no motive of trade or service, 'the most intelligent in apprehension and the most accurate in description.' He was born in Rome in 1586 and sailed for India from Bandar Abbas in Jan. 1623. He visited Cambay, Ahmadabad, Chaul, Goa, Ikkeri, Mangalore and Calicut, and sailed back from Goa to Muscat in November 1624. He honestly records the events which he witnessed, and makes a sincere attempt to be truthful. He

* Hoyland and Banerjee, *The Empire of the Great Mogal*, Bombay, 1928.

notices the freedom of conscience in the Mughul dominions and the respect for Hindu sentiments by the prohibition in Cambay of slaughter of cows. His letters 'bring forth to the mind's eye a vivid and life-like representation of men and manners as they existed in the early part of the seventeenth century in the Portuguese Settlements on the coast and in the native territories adjacent to them.'

Mandelslo, the young German traveller, was in India for a brief period of nearly a year in 1638. Olearius published the full narrative of Mandelslo in 1658, four years later appeared a French version by Wicquefort and this was rendered into English by John Davis. His account of the Mughul administrative system, his description of the city of Agra and others are highly interesting.

Peter Mundy, who remained in India for eight years from 1628 to 1636, gives a faithful record of the prosperity of the country and people of India under Shah Jahan. 'His account of the Moghul system of government is a mixed yarn, but his picture of the severe famine of 1630 and the description of the sufferings of the people is very touching.'* Among the French travellers, Bernier, Tavernier and Thevenot deserve consideration here. Thevenot died on his journey home from India. Tavernier who has been rightly regarded as the 'Prince of Ramblers,' was a French commercial traveller who made six prosperous voyages to India between 1641 and 1666, visited many places from Surat to Dacca and Masulipatam and spent about ten years in this country. In 1665, in his last voyage, he had an audience with Aurangzeb making him some valuable presents and selling him a number of precious stones. Finally the jeweller reached Paris, at the close of the year 1668. As he was now sixty-three years of age and a very wealthy man, he resolved to retire from business and enjoy his fortune. He lived on to a wealthy and honoured old age, dying at Moscow in 1689.

The voyages of Tavernier are valuable for their account of the social and economic conditions but not equally so regarding political events. His descriptions of Indian cities are noteworthy. He is a good authority on the Indian diamond mines in the 17th century. He confirms the evidence of previous travellers as to the oppressive provincial administrations.

* B. P. Saksena, *History of Sha Jahan* XXV.

'With interesting but isolated pieces of information such as the foregoing the *six voyages* abounds. Tavernier narrates them as they occur. He does not seek, like Bernier to find the historical or social philosophy underlying his facts, or, like Thevenot, to weld those facts into a general account of India. Therein lies the difference between the commercial traveller and his more philosophical contemporaries' (Oaten- *Foreign Travellers*, p.192).

Jean de Thevenot was born at Paris on the 6th June 1633. He died near the small town of Miana in Persia while returning to his native land in 1667 after an arduous journey of about four years. During this span of thirty-four years he travelled considerably in many countries in Europe, Asia and Africa. An ardent student of geography, ethonology and natural sciences, he assiduosly studied the accounts of early travellers in which his uncle Melechisedech was highly interested. In 1666, he arrived near Diu after having visited Carthage, Egypt, Persia and Bagdad. After paying a visit to Cambay, Ahmadabad and Burhanpur, he returned to Surat, where he witnessed the interesting ceremony of the marriage of the governor's daughter. At this point in his narrative, Thevenot devotes considerable space to a description of all the chief towns of North-West India, as well as of the previous history of Gujarat. Then he paid a visit to Golconda, Aurangabad and Daulatabad. He was the first European traveller to describe the wonderful cave-temples of Ellora. By the end of 1667 he sailed for Bandar-Abbas en route to France, but the rigours of his unceasing travels had impaired his health and he passed away in Persia at the age of thirty-four. After his death, his manuscripts were arranged and published by two of his friends. They passed through many editions and were translated into English, Dutch and German. 'To the students of Indian History *Thevenot's Voyages* is a work of abiding interest, for nothing illustrates so well the merits and demerits of a foreign traveller's account of a country so vast with a history so chequered and a culture so ill-comprehended.' (*Indian Travels of Careri and Thevenot*, ed. S.N.Sen Intn. xix). Bernier, a well educated and experienced traveller came to India in 1658 and stayed for twelve years. His observations on the War of Succession are valuable. 'He enjoyed unrivalled opportunities of observation; was acquainted with the leading philosphers of his day; was fully conversant with the newest historical and philosophical methods; and was easily capable of looking beyond

the immediate occasion of an event to its ultimate cause. The result was that the *Historie de la derniere Revolution des Etats du Grand Moghul*, which was published in 1670, and the various letters which he wrote from India to his friends in France, are among the first authorities which the historian of Aurangzeb consults.'*

Bernier was patronised by Danishmand Khan, a leading mansabdar at court. The War of Succession was described to Bernier by a French gunner in the service of Aurangzeb. The news of the tragedy of Dara, he obtained from the Portuguese, the Muhammadans, and the Dutch who were present in Bengal. He also consulted European merchants long settled in the country, ambassadors and interpreters. His description of Delhi, Agra including the Taj, and Kashmir is instructive. He also makes significant observations on the administration of justice in the Mughul empire, criticising the panegyrics of some previous travellers.

Bernier's Travels has been translated by Constable, and edited by V.A. Smith, O.U.P. 1914.

Another prominent writer on 17th century India was Niccolao Manucci whose voluminous writings form an important source of information for the period. He left Venice while still a boy and spent his lifetime in India. His knowledge of Persian and Turki made him enter the service of Dara, whom he served with loyalty and devotion. He was present at the battle of Samugadh, escaped to Lahore to join his patron and followed him to Multan. After many vicissitudes he again entered service under Prince Shah Alam in 1678 and observed much of Mughul politics and social life. 'But like most other European writers he is not to be depended upon where he speaks not from personal knowledge or experience but merely from hearsay and bazaar gossip.' (S.R. Sharma). He died in 1717. His *Storia de Mogor* translated by William Irvine is in four volumes, and an abridged edition of the same in one volume, containing the observations relevant to our needs, has been published by Irvine's daughter Margaret L. Irvine under the title—*A Pepys of Mogul India* (John Murray, London, 1913).

This monumental work is one of the extraordinary documents bearing on Indian History that we possess. As a history, it is, as

* Oaten, *Foreign Travellers*, (p. 198).

Mr. Irvine, its editor, says ' a somewhat mingled yarn, comprising, among other items of information, a vivacious account of the author's travels, which is scattered here and there in the history proper—a chronicle of previous Mogul Kings, a valuable treatise on the Mogul court, administration and institutions, absurd supposed extracts from official chronicles, a useful description of the rest of India outside the Mogul dominions, and a full and important account of all Aurangzeb's and part of Shahjahan's reign . . . . For the closing years of Shahjahan and for all Aurangzeb's reign Manucci is a writer who cannot be ignored.'

Mr. Oaten Sums up the value of some of these writers in the following words :

' Bernier appeals to the philosophic historian ; Tavernier to the arm chair reader who regards a book as a pleasant method of passing the time ; Manucci to the man who reads with the combined object of instruction and diversion. Each in his own sphere is unrivalled. If they are judged by their skill in arranging their facts and in synthetising them into a complete and well-balanced picture, Manucci is not worthy to be mentioned in the same breath with Bernier ; but considered merely as a store house of observed political and social information, the Venetian's book is perhaps destined to be of more ultimate value to the historian of India.' (*Foreign Travellers*, p. 226).

The accounts of Dr. Fryer and Dr. Careri supplement and corroborate the voyages of the above mentioned travellers of the 17th century. Dr. Fryer's narrative conveys to us a considerable amount of information relative to Sivaji and the Maratha power in general. He was in Persia and India during the nine years ending in 1681. His observations in India were confined to places on the Coromandel and Malabar coasts, and to trips a little way inland at various places between Cambay and Goa. For his limited field however, ' he is a valuable authority, in addition to which he is an exceedingly interesting writer.' He has an excellent account of the two cities of Bombay and Surat ; the more important aspect of his narrative is his analysis of the political condition of the kingdom of Bijapur. Moreover the historian of Sivaji cannot afford to neglect the *Voyage of Fryer*.

Careri, a man of noble family, was born in 1651 and died at Naples in 1725, long after he had concluded his tour round the world. A student of Jurisprudence and a lawyer by profession,

Careri had attained the highest distinction in the University and secured the degree of Doctor of Civil Law. Some reason made him leave his country and seek peace abroad. As the editor of *Churchill's Voyages and Travels* says he did not go 'as a vagabond trusting to fortune, but well provided with money to make him acceptable in all parts and gain admitance where others under worse circumstances could not.' Like his contemporary traveller Thevenot, he traversed the different European countries, and reached India, but unlike his French predecessor he did not undertake an ambitious survey of the Mughul empire. He furnishes graphic descriptions of the cities and camps he visited himself and his minute account of the churches and convents of Goa is accurate in every detail. He depended on hearsay for the history of the ruling dynasties and the civil administration of the country, and his narrative is not free from minor mistakes. Careri has given a graphic and detailed account of Goa. His description of the 'Fruits and flowers of Industan' is worthy of study. His description of the Kanheri caves is instructive. 'Careri has some very interesting remarks on the Mughul theory of administration and on the land system ; a useful analysis of Aurangzeb's revenue and wealth, and of the extent of his territory ; a critical dissertation on his absolute power ; and an examination of the organization of his army . . . . It is as an authority for the condition of Aurangzeb's army in the midst of its Deccan campaign that he is indispensable' (Oaten, *Foreign Travellers*, p. 236).

Careri's volumes were first published at Naples in 1697-1700 and first made known to Englishmen in Churchill's *A Collection of Voyages and Travels* (1700). But these seventeenth century travellers did not rise above the credulity of their age and were not adequately informed about the political condition and geography of India. Yet 'as a contemporary source of Indian history they will always remain indispensable, but what cannot be dispensed with is not necessarily infallible' (*Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, Intro. lxiv). We can close our account of the foreign travellers of 17th century by reproducing the remarks of Sir Jadunath Sirkar on the extent of their reliability and credulity.

'Their works are of undoubted value as throwing light on the condition of the people, the state of trade and industry, and the history of Christian churches in India. Moreover, the criticism of Indian institutions by foreign observers has a freshness and

weight all its own. But of the political history of India apart from the few events in which they took part or which they personally witnessed, their report merely reproduced the bazaar rumours and the stories current among the populace, and cannot be set against the evidence of contemporary histories and letters in Persian.... From their position these foreign travellers had no access to the best sources of information ; the state archives were closed to them. They visited the makers of Indian history only occasionally and as suppliants for favours ; hence they could not derive the oral information which only familiar intercourse with the highest personages in camp and court could have given them. Finally, their imperfect knowledge of literary Persian prevented them from using the written annals of the time and checking the reports they had received orally.' (*History of Aurangzeb*, I p.xxi—ii).

For the later Mughul history, we have a number of court chronicles, Akhbarats, the East India Company correspondence and Maratha despatches. Among the secondary authorities, *The Fall of the Moghul Empire of Hindustan* by H.G.Keene, New ed. London, 1887 ; *The Fall of Moghul Empire* by Sidney Owen, London, 1912 ; *History of India*—Elphinstone Bk. XII p. 675-753 ; *Later Moghuls* by W.Irvine ed. by J.N.Sarkar in two volumes, Calcutta ; *Fall of the Moghul Empire* by J.N.Sarkar in four volumes (Calcutta, Sarkar & Sons) may be mentioned.

Sources for Maratha History

The Maratha people who created an independent state under the leadership of Shivaji, late in the 17th century, played a very important part in Indian politics throughout the 18th century. The first European who attempted to write the history of the Marathas is Edward Scott Waring. His *History of the Marathas* was published in 1810 in London. The author worked for seven years in the English embassy at Poona and had full access to the records of the Marathas.

But the greatest historian of those who attempted to write the history of the Marathas in English is James Cunningham Grant Duff. He was Captain of the native infantry of Bombay and Political Agent at Satara (1806-1822). The first edition of his well known *History of Mahrattas* was published in London in 1826 (in 3 vols.). In its latest form (1921) it has been resurrected in two volumes edited by S.M.Edwards with an interesting 'Memoir of the Author' and a learned Introduction,

'The want of a complete history of the rise, progress and decline of our immediate predecessors in conquest, the Mahrattas,' writes Grant Duff, 'has been long felt by all persons conversant with the affairs of India ; in so much that it is very generally acknowledged, we cannot fully understand the means by which our own vast empire in that quarter was acquired, until this desideratum be supplied.'

Fully aware of the difficulties of Robert Orme and Scott Waring, Grant Duff laboured hard to make good their deficiencies with what result modern scholars best know.

'Circumstances placed me,' he says in his preface to the first volume of the original edition, 'in situations which at once removed many of the obstacles which those gentlemen (Orme and Waring) encountered, and threw materials within my reach which had been previously inaccessible.' But it may be said that Grant Duff prepared the way for all his successors providing a good starting point in the writing of a History of the Maratha people. About the nature of Maratha sources, the advice of M.S.Elphinstone, to Grant Duff has already been quoted. Grant Duff's *History* is based on the Maratha records available in those times. On the subversion of the Peshwa's Government, the most important of their public and secret correspondence were made over to him by Elphinstone, who was the sole Commissioner for the settlement of the conquered territory in the Deccan. Captain Dundas, under the orders of Elphinstone, allowed Confidential Agents employed by him to have access to the mass of papers which were found in the Peshwa's palace. The Revenue and State accounts of the Maratha Government were examined for him by Captain Mac Leod, who was the first Assistant to the Commissioner. The records of the Satara Government were in Grant Duff's charge and he himself had free access to the records in the Bombay Secretariat and of the old Surat Factory. The viceroy of Goa furnished him with extracts from the records of the Portuguese Government. The Court of Directors, too, allowed him partial access to the records in the India Office in order to corroborate a variety of facts derived from purely Maratha sources. Besides these various records, temple records, imperial and royal deeds, state papers in the possession of men once high in authority under the Peshwa government were also procured to him.

But Grant Duff wrote for his own countrymen, and it is natural that considering the materials made use of by him, more of them should have suspected that his narrative did not form the last word in the history of the Marathas. There are some loop-holes in his account of the Marathas. He has omitted an account of several of the expeditions of the Peshwas. He could not grasp the full significance of the Maratha institutions. But yet it can be truly said that Grant Duff's *History of Mahrattas* 'takes its place in the very first rank of historical compositions.'

The English historian of the Marathas failed to apprehend correctly the great moral which the Maratha history possesses for all ages. He has lent colour to the view prevalent until recently that the rise of the Marathas was due to fortuitous circumstances, and has compared this rise to the sudden conflagrations which often occur in the Sahyadri mountains.

Mahadev Govind Ranade's *Rise of the Maratha Power*, published in 1901, was the first of its kind written by an Indian, that too by a Maharashtrian. This book marks a milestone in Maratha Historiography. 'The rise of the Maratha power,' he pointed out, 'was not a mere accident due to any chance combination, but a genuine effort on the part of a Hindu nationality to assert its independence'; and that 'the success it achieved was due to a general upheaval, social, religious and political of all classes of the population.' His general introduction to Sahu Chhatrapati and the Peshwas' Diaries is a very valuable sequel indicating the sound principles of his treatment.

A History of the Maratha People by C.A.Kincaid and D.B. Parasnis, published in three volumes in 1918 marks further progress in the field of Maratha Historiography. Parasnis was an indefatigable worker in the field of historical research. He is well known to the public as the author of the standard biography of Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi, of works on the Nawabs of Oudh, the navy of the Marathas and so on. His collections of Maratha letters are of very great value to the students of Maratha history. Whenever we speak of historical research in Maharashtra, the name of Rao Bahadur Parasnis comes prominently to our mind.

Among other materials mention may be made of the works published under the auspices of the Bharat Itihas Samsodhak Mandal, a Society started in Poona with the object of advancing historical research. There are many critical essays which are of

great value to the students of Maratha history and some documents of historical value have been published in the journal and proceedings of the Mandal.

The name of G.S.Sardesai occupies a unique place in the field of Maratha historiography. His work has been described already. Besides the monumental work of Sardesai, there are other very learned treatises, such as Sarkar's *Sivaji and His Times*, and Surendranath Sen's *Administrative System of the Marathas*, *Military System of the Marathas*, and *Foreign Biographies of Sivaji*; *The Third Battle of Panipat* by Sejwalkar is also noteworthy.

'The royal period (1600-1700) of Maratha history differs fundamentally from the Peshwa period (18th century) not only in the extent but also in the nature of its historical records. Not only is there a striking difference between the wealth of contemporary documents in Persian and English that illuminate the history of the Peshwas and the comparative poverty of the same for Sivaji's reign and those of his two sons....The Marathas were more busy with the sword than with the pen ; no literature proper, no long history or biography was produced then. Hence, the Maratha Kingdom before the Peshwa period utterly lacks the state papers, detailed official histories, personal memoirs and letter books of which Moghul history is so full'. (J.N.Sarkar).

The historian of Sivaji has to cull out the sources in eight languages : Marathi, Sanskrit, Hindi, Persian, English, French, Dutch and Portuguese. The chief documents that now survive are in English and Persian. On the other hand, the Persian and English sources were absolutely contemporary, promptly written with due respect to chronology, and carefully preserved since then. The writers belonged to a higher intellectual calibre than the Marathi chroniclers, as is clearly seen from a comparative study of the sources in the three languages.

The chief Marathi sources for the reign of Sivaji are the Bakhars or chronicles and the correspondence of Maratha history. Though the Bakhars in general 'contain merely a few particles of truth floating in a sea of absurdity' (Rajawade), the only exception is the *Subasad Bakhar*, written in 1694 at Jinji by order of Raja Ram. A small book of barely 100 pages, composed from memory without the help of written memoranda or documents, it suffers from chronological and topographical inaccuracies. But yet it is the best Marathi biography of Sivaji. Later biographies

have been based on this Marathi chronicle. This has been edited by K.N. Sane, 3rd ed. 1912 and translated into English by J.L. Manker as *Life and Exploits of Sivaji* (Bombay 1886). The later chronicles like *Chitragupta Bakhar, Shiva digvijaya, Shiva Pratapa* etc. are no more than versions based on *Subasad Bakhar*, incorrect and pure guess work in many cases. No state paper is used, there is no idea of correct chronology. 'They are no more histories than the Sanskrit Puranas, and they bear the signs of being the production of some ignorant credulous dull-brained persons and not the work of any intelligent minister of state or scholarly author' (Sarkar).

The *Jedhe Sakavali* is a bare record of events with dates maintained by the family of Kanhoji Jedhe, a Coadjutor of Sivaji, covering the period of 1618-1697. *The Jedhe Karina*, a necessary supplement to the *Sakavali*, helps us to know some of the activities of Sivaji. The letters of Sivaji to his father and to his officers enable us to understand the inner motive and mind of Sivaji in his founding of the Maratha State.

Among the Sanskrit works, the *Radha-madhava-vilasa-champu* by Jayaram Pindye, ed. by Rajawade (1922), the *Siva Bharat* by Paramanand, ed. by S.M. Divekar (1927), and *Sivaraj-Rajyabhishek-Kalpataru* throw some light on the career, conquests and coronation of Sivaji. Some of these Sanskrit poems are very reliable and useful. They are generally in the form of epic poems and dialogues. The *Siva bharat* is an incomplete epic consisting of thirty-one chapters and 2262 verses. It generally agrees with *Jede Sakavali* with regard to the achievements of Sivaji.

The Rajavyavahara Kosh, a Persian-Sanskrit dictionary of political terms in verse, compiled at the instances of Sivaji by Raghunath Hanmante, is very useful to understand the civil and military organisation of Sivaji. The Hindi poets Bhusan and Lal Kavi praise Sivaji extravagantly.

The Persian sources which are generally contemporary in character are among the most useful materials for the history of Sivaji. Most of the Persian histories, official and private, written in the time of Aurangzeb deal with the life and exploits of Sivaji. Of them, the histories of Khafi Khan and Bhimsen are very valuable. Khafi Khan always associates the name of Sivaji with some vituperative epithets, like the reprobate, the father of fraud, the daring free booter, and so on. But Bhimsen was an eye witness to some

of the activities of Sivaji. His estimate of Sivaji is worth reproducing : 'a soldier, unequalled, skilled in the arts of government, and a friend to men of virtue and religion' (Rawlinson and Patwardan).

The records of the English factories on the Bombay coast and inland relating to Sivaji begin from 1659 and contain notices of events as they were reported without any attempt to embellish them. The English at Rajpur and Karwar employed spies who travelled in Sivaji's dominions and brought back news of his doings and plans. But these documents do not supply information on all the achievements of Sivaji. They tell us something about the relations of Sivaji with the English. They are weak on the biographical side of Sivaji ; Dr. Fryer who was in Surat in 1673 gives a vivid account of Sivaji's army, 'more splendid' than the contemporary Mughul forces.

As we have already seen, several foreign travellers visited India in the 17th century. Some of them like Bernier and Tavernier, Thevenot and Carre either knew personally Sivaji well or heard of his activities in the South. It is, therefore, natural that Sivaji should find a place in their published and unpublished works, though their information cannot be always taken to be true. The historian Robert Orme was familiar with some of the works of these travellers. Of these Abbe Carre visited India twice (1668 to 1671) and on the second occasion travelled overland from Surat to Fort St. George. His *History of Sivaji,* though defective in some respects, contains a comparison of Sivaji with Ceasar. 'It is needless to say that Carre's work is of unequal value. His account of the two sacks of Surat, the Maratha raid into Bardes and Sivaji's conciliatory policy towards the European merchant nations is substantially correct, but there is much in his history and its sequel that is no better than ordinary bazar gossip. About the early career of Sivaji, he was hopelessly ignorant. Like Cosme da Guarda, Carre was also an enthusiastic admirer of Sivaji and in him we come across an impartial witness who testifies to the respect and admiration in which the Maratha hero was held not only by his officers and subjects but also by his enemies and adversaries' (Sen, *Foreign Biographies*).

The value of *Memoire of Francois Martin* (of Pondicherry) is the highest imaginable for Sivaji's Karnatak expedition. His agents were frequently in attendance in the camp of Sivaji and

the reports they brought back were immediately entered in his diary.

Martin served the French East India Company for a couple of years. In 1670 he was at Surat and heard a rumour that Sivaji contemplated a second sack of that wealthy emporium of oriental trade. As an ally of Sher Khan Lodi of Valikanda-puram, Martin closely watched the political movements in the neighbourhood.

He was fully aware of what was going on in Western India. In 1675 he received some letters from Monsieur Baron, then at Rajapur, telling him of Sivaji's fresh conquests at the expense of the King of Bijapur. At the instance of French East India Company, he wrote a daily journal of everything that deserved notice since his arrival in Madagascar, and these notes were later continued after he came to India. For our purpose Martin's *Memoire* is of the highest value as it furnishes the best contemporary account of Sivaji's Karnatak expedition and thereby forms a necessary supplement to *Subasad Bakhar*. The letters of the Madura Mission dated 1659, 1676, 1678 and 1682 throw some welcome light on the activities of Sivaji and Venkaji in the Coromandel Coast.

Of the Dutch writers, the accounts of Gautier Schouten and De Graaf throw valuable light on the main incidents of Sivaji's life. Schouten has referred to the first sack of Surat by Sivaji (Vol. I 399-400). 'De Graaf, the Surgeon,' says Orme, 'made six voyages to the East Indies, in the service of the Dutch company. His first outset from Holland was in the year 1640, his last return in 1687, a period of remarkable length in such wearisome employment. In each voyage he was detained several years abroad, and sent to different parts, where the Dutch had concerns or settlements and seems to have fared at them well. He gives much and various information. The first mention he makes of Sevagi, is where it might be least expected, when he was travelling in Bengal, when nearer the operations of Sevagi, he mentions him only once.'

The *Dagh-Register* (Diary) of Batavia enables us to follow the events till 1665. The letters of the Dutch factors at Surat Vengurla and Karwar also come to our aid in elucidating the history of Sivaji. They corroborate the accounts of the above two travellers with regard to the sack of the city of Surat by Sivaji.

Most of the above travellers have mentioned Sivaji only

incidentally and some of the French travellers have devoted some interesting chapters to the career of Sivaji. The credit of first writing a systematic biography belongs to Cosme da Guarda whose *Life of Sivaji* (1695), though defective in several respects, makes some interesting and instructive observations on the greatness and efficiency of Sivaji's army in contradistinction to the Mughul forces. De Guarda wrote in Portuguese and described himself as an inhabitant of Goa. He was one of the admirers of Sivaji and was quite conversant with the manners and customs of Western India. His *Life of Sivaji* preceded *Subasad Bakhar* by one year but did not see the light till 1730. De Guarda's biography gained immense popularity among the Portuguese officers serving in India. It may be inferred from De. Guarda's writings that his Portuguese neighbours held a very high opinion about the generalship and statesman-like qualities of Sivaji. The Goa records are mainly corroborative. They elucidate the military, naval and diplomatic activities of Sivaji, the significance of the Chauth and other administrative arrangements.

Portugueses e Maratas, i. Sivaji by Panduranga Pissurlencar (reprinted from the Boletim do Instituto Vasco da Gama) is the fullest and most scholarly work on the Portuguese relations with Sivaji and supersedes all other works on the subject.

We can close our accounts of Foreign evidences of Sivaji by reproducing the estimate of Dr. S.N. Sen over these writings :

' To these intelligent observers we are indebted for the earliest biographies of the Maratha hero. It is futile to expect from them unimpeachable accuracy or impartial history, but they have preserved for us a number of interesting anecdotes, contemporary gossips and incidentally some information of real historical value. Some of these foreign writers were men of good education and real learning, Fryer was a Doctor of Medicine, Bernier and Dellon belong to the same learned profession. Thevenot was a man of wide cultural interests. Navarette, Carre and Ovington were clergymen ; but they all suffered from defects of the same kind, if not of the same degree. Ovington was guilty of two serious mistakes in a single sentence about the first sack of Surat, although he visited that city only twenty-five years after the incident. In spite of these obvious defects no serious student can afford to ignore the testimony of these European writers ; if they lacked accuracy and precision, they alone could and did transmit a

faithful portrait of Sivaji as his contemporaries knew and saw him.' (*Foreign Biographies*, Intro. p. XIII—XIV).

Some of the Kannada works of the 18th century are also helpful as they throw some side light on the careers of Shaji, Sivaji, and his successors. Among these we may note, Linganna's *Keladi Nripa Vijaya* ; Govinda Vaidya's *Kanthirava Narasarajendra Vijaya*, and the anonymous historical account called *Hyder-nama*. The two former are Kavyas of great merit. Linganna is supposed to have completed his work by 1763 ; Govinda finished his work by 1648 ; and *Hyder-nama* was completed by 1782. Linganna's work is a regular chronicle of the Keladi kings, while that of Govindayya is an account of the wars of the Mysore king Kanthirava Narasa Raja Odeyar. The *Hyder-nama* is an excellent biography of Hyder Ali, the Sultan of Mysore. Of these Linganna's account covers a wide range of Maratha history with special reference to the parentage and lineage of Sivaji. If Linganna's account is valuable for the earlier phase of Maratha history, *Hyder-nama* is helpful for the later phase of the Marathas in the 18th century. The anonymous author gives an authentic account of the many phases of Hyder Ali's administration and his wars with the contemporary Maratha Peshwas and other kingdoms.

The Peshwa Period—1707-1818 A.D.

The two centuries that followed the death of Aurangzeb witnessed momentous changes in the history of India. The Mughul empire rapidly faded out as an effective force in politics, though its memory lingered on till the middle of the nineteenth century and influenced the trend of events like the memory of the Roman Empire. The Marathas spread their sway over nearly the whole of India under the great Peshwas. In the North, the English gradually asserted their political supremacy and came into conflict with all the native powers including the Marathas. The nature of the sources for this period is quite different from that of the previous periods. The Peshwas established a huge secretariat at Poona and carried on regular correspondence with their agents in different parts of India and with other native powers. This daily correspondence and other official records form a useful source of information. The contemporary East India Company correspondence must also be taken into consideration.

The primary sources for the study of Peshwa period consist of three categories (1) The Marathi official records popularly

known as the Peshwa Daftars, (2) The Persian Records, (3) The English Records, popularly known as the *Residency Correspondence*. Students of Indian History are generally aware that, when the Maratha dominion was incorporated into British dominion in 1818, all its official records were carefully housed at Poona by the British Government and came to be popularly known as 'The Peshwa's Daftars' of which the late Mr. Jackson, a scholar of repute, remarked that 'no Government in India owns a collection of vernacular state papers that approaches in interest or importance those of the Poona Daftar and it is the duty of Government to make them available to all students of Indian History.'

This daftar consists mainly of the original Marathi records of the Peshwa administration and about the contents of the records Mac Leod states :

'The general contents of the Daftar under the Peshwas may be described as follows :—All accounts rendered to the Government of the revenue and expenditure of the district, with the settlements of them by government ; the accounts of districts rendered by the hereditary district officers, and those of villages by the village officers, of farms, of customs, accounts of all alienations of the public revenue, whether Inam or otherwise ; of the pay, rights and privileges of the government and village officers ; accounts of the strength and pay of troops, and the expenses of all civil, military and religious establishments. In the Rozkirds were registers of all revenue transactions generally, together with all grants and payments, and more particularly the accounts of all contributions and executions levied on foreign states ; the whole of which were considered and exhibited in one comprehensive view in the Turjums.'

These Marathi historical records were published by the Bombay Government itself in 1934 in 45 volumes edited by G.S. Sardesai under the title of *Selections from the Peshwa's Daftar*. But these records of the Peshwas come to an abrupt end, with the exception of a few papers, about the year 1782, because Nana Fadnis, who was in sole charge of the Peshwa's Government at Poona, received and looked after all the despatches and state papers that reached the capital. When he died in 1800, all the official correspondence were transferred to his country residence at Manvali, whence they found their way to Satara and came to be partly published by R.B. Parasnis. They also form the principal

contents of the Satara Historical Museum. Moreover after the close of the first Maratha War in 1782, Poona ceased to be the centre of Maratha politics. Mahadji Sindhia controlled the Indian politics of late 18th century.

Another mass of Marathi records relating to North India during the 18th century is the *Gulgule Daftar* of Kotah, of which two volumes have been edited by A.B.Phalke. But they largely deal with Sindhia's dealings with Rajaputana.

The *Patwardhan Papers*, edited by V.V. Khare (14 volumes), give us news-letters from the Peshwa's court and echoes of North Indian affairs of great interest, but these do not rank as state papers, except with reference to Poona politics.

There are also the 13 volumes of Marathi extracts with English summaries, issued under the title of *Selections from the Satara Raja's and Peshwa Diaries* (Nine volumes of the so called diaries and four supplementary volumes named Sanads and letters, Kaifiyats, Treaties,Agreements and decisions) published by a private agency with liberal aid from the Bombay Government. But these were not diaries in the true sense of the word, they contained only extracts from the daily account books, giving items of income and expenditure with grants and judicial decisions now and then. These Marathi records come to an end with the year 1723, when the Treaty of Salbai closed the first Anglo-Maratha War and British Residents began to be posted at the Maratha courts. The correspondence between these Residents and the Governor-general, as well as duplicates of the more important of the letters, written by one Resident to another or to the Governors of Bombay and Madras and British military chiefs, popularly known as *The Poona Residency Correspondence* comes down to 1818 when the line of the Peshwas ended and Maharashtra came under direct British rule.

These Poona Residency Records consist of about a hundred files each containing from some 700 to 800 pages in manuscript and came to be saved from the fire set to the British Residency by Baji Rao when he took up arms against the British in the last Maratha War. They related to the political affairs of almost all parts of India covering a period of 33 years from the appointment of Malet in 1785 to the annexation of the Peshwa's dominions in 1818. 'They form a mine of information of the highest value in point of originality and detail concerning the internal affairs not

only of the Marathas, but of the various other Indian powers and thus they constitute the principal basis of history for practically the whole of British India. For the affairs of Tipu Sultan, the Nizam, the Rajaput States, and the various Maratha Chiefs and confederates, these papers offer a virgin field to the research student, and when published, they would render the present standard works of Anglo-Indian History mostly obsolete' (Sardesai). Prof. J.N. Sarkar and Sardesai have rendered a monumental service to the advancement of Maratha historiography by editing these English records in 14 volumes, published under the authority of Bombay Government. These volumes form a necessary supplement to the Marathi series, and in many respects complementary to the English records preserved in the Bombay Secretariat, of which G.W. Forrest edited four volumes of selections (one relating to Maratha history and three to British Indian) about 50 years, ago.

What enhances the value of these English records is that they supply two elements which are wanting in the Marathi records. Their intelligence is far more accurate and widespread than that of the Marathas; and the despatches of the English residents give a broader survey of Indian Politics and a deeper and more intelligent criticism of character and policy than is to be met within the terms of matter-of-fact Marathi letters. Therefore they enable us to reach the root causes of events and to trace the wider movements of Indian politics in a degree unattainable by the indigenous Persian and Marathi sources. Several of these English Residents like Colet and M. Elphinstone were men of high intellectual calibre, of extraordinary capacity, resourcefulness and power of initiative and their spy system was also perfect.

There are some valuable Persian contemporary sources which supplement, and where necessary correct, the narratives and dates occurring in these English records. We can select only a few Persian chronicles and Marathi records which throw light on this period. They are: (1) a Persian Chronicle of Delhi from 1738 to 1798, described by J.N. Sarkār in the Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission Vol. III (1921), (2) The letters of Hingane family of the Peshwas' envoys at Delhi, in the Marathi language and (3) *Ibratnamah* or historical memoirs of Faquir Khair-ud-din. A native of Allahabad, Khair-ud-din was James Anderson's

Persian secretary and agent. Apart from the defects in his memoir, it gives us the inside view of contemporary North Indian politics —or diplomacy below stairs—for several years, while the Resident's despatches give us the official or front window view of the same. This work is the fullest and best history we possess of Shah Alam's reign and Mahadji Sindhia's doings up to 1792. Francklin's *Shah Alam*, written in 1798, suffers from the defect that he missed this source, which was composed in 1806. Recently J.N. Sarkar has edited some of the Persian sources with a scholarly introduction, under the title '*The Persian Sources of Maratha History*,' published by the Bombay Government in 1953.

The third battle of Panipat has evoked the interest of so many contemporary chroniclers and historians. The *Tarikh-i-Manazilu-l-Futuh* of Muhammod Jafar Shamlu is the account of an eye witness of the battle of Panipat and the events leading thereto. The author states that 'during the prime of life' and 'for the space of five-and-twenty years' he was constantly with Ahmad Sultan Abdali, and having accompanied him several times to Hindustan, became well acquainted with the whole series of royal marches from the city of Kandahar to the metropolis of Shah-Jahanabad. The author himself was present on the field and witnessed the circumstances with his own eyes. He learnt other particulars from persons of credit and sagacity, and having written them down without any alteration, designated the work by the title of *Manazilu-l-Futuh* or *Victorious marches*. Kashi Raj Pandit's account of the Panipat events, as found in Col. James Browne's translation has been edited with valuable notes and appendices, by principal H.G.Rawlinson (O.U.P. 1926). 'The literature of this campaign is immense,' writes Rawlinson, 'and a study of it, even from Marathi documents, would alone occupy a large volume. The Persian sources have yet to be adequately catalogued and examined.' In their absence Kashi Raj's 'is the most detailed account we possess of the battle, and is the work of an eye-witness who evidently desires to give an impartial narrative of what he saw and heard. He had many friends in both armies and was equally impressed by the gallantry of the Marathas and by the masterly strategy of their opponent the Abdali monarch' (Introduction). Sejwalkar's account of the *Third Battle of Panipat* published by the Deccan College, is the latest addition on the literature of the battle.

Another valuable contemporary account in Persian has been translated by Sir J.N. Sarkar in the pages of the *Islamic Culture* (Vol. VII No. 3 p. 431-56). It is entitled '*An original Account of Ahmad Shah Durrani's Campaigns in India and the Battle of Panipat*' from the Persian Life of Najib-ud-daulah (British Museum Persian Manuscript 24, 410).

The Nigar-Nama-i-Hind of Saiyid Ghulam Ali covers the ground in much greater detail. For the battle of Panipat ' the author informs us that his authority was a Brahman of the Deccan named Rao Krishna Rao, who was in the service of Nawab Shuja'u-d-daula of Oudh, and was present at the interview which the Maratha envoy Bhawani Shankar had with him ' (Dowson).

The Sources for the study of British Indian History

A proper study of the rise and growth of British dominion in India is absolutely indispensable for the proper understanding of the present day problems and institutions. There are possibly in this period more numerous and more markedly divergent points of view, though a smaller number of gaps, and more urgent and vital problems awaiting solution that are of significance to the present and the future of our land than in similar periods of the past. The manuscript materials for the study of British Indian History preserved in the National Archives and other State Departments of India, as well as in England, are enormous. In India itself there is a vast volume of material dealing with almost every phase first of the Company's activity and then of the Crown. It is calculated that the India Office in England (now merged in Commonwealth Relations Office) alone contains more than 50 thousand volumes in its record collection. It is an inspiring centre of research, and many historians have availed themselves of the facilities which are generously provided by the authorities of the department. As has been repeatedly pointed out by many historians, the difficulties of the student of Modern Indian History consist not so much in the collection of material as in its selection. In addition to these published and unpublished records, there have been accumulated a staggering amount of pamphlet literature embodying the swaying passions and prejudices of the men who played a part in the drama of European enterprise, and of the collections of letters received and copies of letters despatched which it was usual for men in high offices in those days to keep for themselves. Thus it is impossible for any one, however vast

and encyclopaedic his knowledge may be, to discuss authoritatively the enormously wide range of manuscript material extending from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century. So we may concentrate on some significant and indispensable works on the history of British India and include in this category all printed works, whether they are works of travel, parliamentary papers or solid historical treatises. Considerable progress has been achieved in the field of Modern Indian History both in the matter of writing general histories and in the publication of historical corpuses. The sifting of data, the tentative inference of conclusions, the process of historical criticism and the final shape of presentation accompanied by a due regard to the nature and character of the material used and to the genius of the period, topic or movement taken up for study, have been, on the whole, done with a fair amount of success and an appreciable crop of excellent work has resulted. The credit for these results should go to those venerable pioneers in this field like Robert Orme, Bruce, James Mill, Marshman, Thornton, Keene, Beveridge and Elphinstone, to whom we owe so much for keeping the subject afresh and alive. Among these, Orme and Bruce wrote under official patronage. An earlier writer, Richard Cambridge made the Anglo-French struggle in the Carnatic the subject of his study. Jonathan Scott's *Deccan* published in 1794 contained more than its title signified. Francklin's *Shah Alum* had been the standard work on the subject until Sarkar wrote his *Fall of the Moghul Empire* (4 Vols. 1932-50). The first quarter of the 19th century introduced many writers whose works are regarded as classics of Indian History. John Malcolm, Mountstuart Elphinstone, James Mill and Beveridge wrote the story of the consolidation of the British power in which the two former had also played their parts. Mill's *History of British India* described by Macaulay during the debates of 1833 as 'on the whole the greatest historical work which has appeared in our language since that of Gibbon' required a considerable effort to read. The subject was little known, the treatment extremely detailed and the tone of the work disagreeably censorious. The utilitarian philosopher described with scant sympathy a society which rested on caste and tradition. The want of personal knowledge of India which he maintained was an aid to impartiality, deprives it of touches which might have softened its rigid outlines. Sympathy and imagination are conspicuously lacking. But the value of the

work lay in its mass of information and its analytical power. It took rank among the classics of its time and won its author a place in the India House.

Henry Beveridge, an English advocate, published in 1862 *A Comprehensive History of India* based as much as possible on original and official sources. It is a work in three large volumes with rich illustrations. Princep wrote his book in 1819 and called it *Political and Military Transactions in India* in his time. The interest of some writers went beyond their own times and the regions which they served. Some carried their labour home. Grant Duff utilised all the Maratha documents and brought out his *History of the Mahrattas* as already noticed. Wilks completed his *History of Mysore*, Elphinstone began his *History of Rise of the British Power in India* in retirement, which he decided to leave incomplete in 1841 ; 'I have no talent for narrative,' he wrote, 'and that is enough to have been fatal to historians as incomparably superior to me as their subjects are to mine.'

But these earlier works of Indo-British History had their defects. The dross of romanticism and sentimentalism which can easily permeate research in more antique epoches, affected these histories in a greater measure. They made mistakes and occasionally failed to understand the people about whom they were writing. From the middle of the 19th century onwards, the character of books on Indo-British History underwent a change. The Europeans began to love the country of their adoption. Among the histories of the post-Mutiny period, four standard histories occupy a prominent place. They are Vincent Smith's *Oxford History of India*, the several volumed *Cambridge History of India*, P.E. Roberts's *History of British India*, Garratt and Thompson's, *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India*. Roberts's volume is superior to the Oxford History. 'For Political Perspective, the Cambridge History, as usual, is dull but reliable, Thompson and Garratt readable but biased' (Philip Woodruff). Professor Dodwell's *British India* is also a standard work on the period. The sources of Modern Indian History may be studied in brief under the following heads (1) the Portuguese, (2) The Dutch and the French, and (3) The English.

Every school-boy knows that the English were preceded by a number of other European adventures like the Portuguese, the Dutch and the French. The ascendancy of the Portuguese lasted

for a century from the 16th century to the 17th century. 'They were the great buccaneers of Asia and roamed about the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal with the ability and daring of their forbears. They lacked both a polity which could give unity and stability to their scattered energy, and an ideal which could inspire the descendants of Vasco Da Gama with the spiritual vigour and fertile energy of the early pioneers' (S.A. Khan).

The achievements of the Portuguese in the East have been examined and interpreted by Danvers with appreciable fulness under the title of *The Portuguese in India* (2 Vols.) Camoen's *Lusiads* (1553) summarises 'the achievements of Portuguese conquerors in a language of suppressed vigour and classic purity'. There are also notices, commentaries and biographies, left by the Portuguese governors and viceroys which are absolutely indispensable for a proper understanding of the Portuguese India in the 16th and 17th centuries. The Hakluyt Society deserves the thanks of all historians for the variety, volume, and scope of its investigations into Portuguese history. The vigorous personality of Albuquerque may be studied in his *Commentaries* while Vasco Da Gama's *Journal* of the first voyage shows the prejudicial and narrow mentality and outlook of the early Portuguese. 'Portuguese histories were written in a vein of pronounced racialism but their mistakes can be corrected by works in Persian and Arabic which covered the same ground.' (S.A. Khan). The translations of Du Jurric, Monserrate, Duarte Barbosa and Albuquerque have thrown a flood of light on Portuguese relations with India. The works of P. L. Cabral, Jao De Barros, Gaspar Correa, Godinho and others also provide useful sources of information about the political and social conditions of Portuguese India.

For the achievements of the Dutch, Colombo and Madras have published most useful selections from the records of the Dutch in India and Ceylon. In the Colombo Record Office, there are more than 3000 volumes of "General Records" and 700 volumes of the Proceedings of the Council. Very few of the standard works in Dutch have been translated into English and the gap in our knowledge of the organisation and powers of the Dutch Company has not yet been filled. The multi-volumed *Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlando-Indicum* of Heeres and Stapel contains some remarkable Dutch documents which throw a flood of light on the achievements of the Dutch in India. The *Batavia Dagh*

Registers also supplement and corroborate the information of the above documents.

For the activities of the French and English East India Companies in the 17th century, we have abundant materials of varied nature. The records of their activity have been preserved in a series of luminous works which are at once the pride of English scholarship, patience and industry. No scholar has rendered greater service to a proper interpretation of this period than Sir William Foster. His monumental work on *English Factories in India*, and *Court Minutes of the East India Company* are a model of solid research. Besides the work of Foster, the historical researches of Yule and of Hunter have made us familiar with the doings of pioneers of trade and industry, and we can follow the progress of Madras or of Bombay in the 17th century. The economic aspect of the century has been thoroughly examined and interpreted by Moreland. The personality of Sir Josiah Child, the dominating figure in the Council of Directors from 1677 down to about the end of the 17th century, is clearly exhibited in his forceful despatches written to the E. I. Company from London. Colonel Love's *Vestiges of Old Madras* is very useful for this period, while the records of the Surat Factory and some Bengal Factories have been utilised by Anderson, Yule, and others. The Indian Travels of Bernier, Tavernier, Manucci, Thevenot, Careri should not be ignored for this period. The manuscript materials of the India Office Library, the National Archives of India and other places have been listed by Mr. S. A. Khan under the title *The Sources for the History of the British in the 17th Century*. C.R.Wilson's *Early Annals of the English in Bengal* is also useful for this period. Talboys Wheeler's *Madras in the Olden Times* can also be consulted.

The primary sources for the 18th century history mainly consist of contemporary state papers, supplemented by Marathi and Persian records. The volume of correspondence with the servants of the E.I.C. in India reached enormous proportions. They had to keep very detailed records of their daily transactions for the perusal of their masters in England. These discussions were entered at length upon the records of Council Meetings and were designated Consultations or Proceedings. This has led to the increase of the mass of documents which supply abundant historical material of first rate importance. These records have been

carefully preserved both in India Office Library and in the National Archives of Delhi. Some of these records have been listed and calendered by Forrest, S. C. Hill and others. The Cornwallis correspondence has been edited by Denison Ross in two volumes. They provide a useful source of information on the relationship of East India Company with the native powers of India. We have also the correspondence exchanged between the East India Company represented at Fort William in Calcutta and the Court of Directors in London, popularly known as *The Fort William Correspondence*. These letters are a veritable mine of information regarding the history of the Company in India. The Government of India decided long ago to publish these letters *in extenso* divided conveniently into 21 volumes and edited by eminent scholars. Only a few volumes have come out so far.

These letters give a true picture of the state of Company's affairs at a critical time of its history. The ignorance of Indian land revenue system on the part of the English and the resultant confusion ; the anxiety of the Company to extend their trade and commerce not only to every part of India but also to the neighbouring countries like Nepal and Tibet ; the drain of specie and the consequent scarcity of silver leading to experiments in bimetallism and gold currency ;—all these are adequately described. The letters give an insight into the actual workings and the evils of Clive's Dual system. They also depict the rather unstable political conditions of the times. There are also occasional glimpses of the social conditions in the country. On the whole, the documents of the Fort William Correspondence are indispensable for the correct understanding of the East India Company's affairs in the 18th century. There is also a lot of material on the Company's relations with other rival European powers, with the titular Mughul Emperor Shah Alam, Shuja-Ud-Daula, Nawab Wazir of Oudh, the rising power of the Rohillas and the Sikhs, the Company's war with Mysore, the Maratha affairs and the threatened invasion of Abdali from the north-west.

The India Office Library, The National Archives of India, The Madras Record Office, The Admiralty and War Office Records, the Archives de Pondichery and Archives du Ministere Colonial (Paris) contain much unpublished matter, to which may be added such printed English records, as the Records of the Fort St. George, Military Consultations, 1752-56, the Siege

Diary, 1757-9, The letters of Kirkpatric and others. The available material is almost endless, and is still increasing.

We have also a number of standard contemporary and later specialised books on this period. Orme's *Military Transactions*, supplemented by Clement Downing, R.O.Cambridge, Colonel Wilks on the South Indian Wars form the chief works on this period. Dodwell's *Dupleix and Clive* is a valuable book concerning the first half of the 18th century. The works of Holwell and Vansittart also glow with the first spring tide of a heroic adventure. We have the chronicles and annals composed by persons who had taken active part in the campaigns or in the administration. Among these, the monumental *Diary of Ananda Ranga Pillai* has been unique as a piece of record rare among Indians. It reflects as has been well remarked by Sir Frederic Price, the 'inmost thoughts and reflections of an extremely able, level-headed oriental, and of his criticisms—which at times are of the freest character—of his fellows and master. It is a strange mixture of things trival and important ; of family matters and affairs of state ; of business transactions and social life of the day ; interspersed with scraps of gossip, all evidently recorded as they came to the mind of the diarist, who might well be dubbed the "Indian Pepys." Homely as is its diction, there are in it descriptions of men and things which are vividly life like, and passages which are startling ; some in their pathos, and others in their shrewdness.'

This unique contemporary diary throws a welcome light on the troubled politics of South India in the fateful years that saw the disintegration of the Muhammadan power in the Carnatic and the growth and final settlement of the conflict for dominion between the English and the French. Ananda Ranga Pillai occupied a most influential position in the French Service and retained his rank and importance even down to his death only just a few days before the surrender of Pondicherry to General Coote in 1761. Ranga Pillai's Diary has run to twelve volumes in its English translation (by J.F.Price and H.H.Dodwell, Madras 1904-1928), in spite of the fact that there were several gaps in the narrative now available, some running on for months at a stretch. Ranga Pillai is seen at his best when writing of Dupleix and of his defects of temper and character. He was only 52 years of age when he died. 'Thus disappeared an acute Indian observer who was far better informed on political matters than any other Indian of the

times and his diary contains more authentic details of a political nature than that which any other Indian at Pondicherry could have kept. He knew most intimately all that was going on in the Indian quarter and was very accurate and valuable in watching the course of the trade and feeling the pulse of the popular sentiment.'

The Life of Lord Clive by Sir George Forrest, also Lives by Sir J. Malcolm and G. B. Malleson are some of the works on the period. The above works may be supplemented by Verelst's *Government of Bengal* and William Bolts's *A Dutch Adventurer under John Company.*

The literature on Warren Hastings is enormous. His versatile and mysterious negotiations continue to evoke the passionate devotion of a band of disciplined scholars. 'Opposition and criticism of his whole administration alternates with fulsome eulogy and sickly sentimentalism' (S.A.Khan).

The principal authorities consist of the *Proceedings of the Bengal Council* and *Select Committee* preserved in duplicate at the National Archives and in the India Office Library. Selections of the official despatches of Clive and Warren Hastings have been edited by Sir George Forrest. The works of S. C. Hill, Long, Marshman, Keene, Dodwell and S. C. Hill are well known to all the students of the period. 'There is no good full-dress *Life* of any Indian statesmen or soldier of the first rank. Of shorter *Lives*, those in the series 'Rulers of India' are often good ; of longer *Lives*, Gleig's *Warren Hastings* is almost unreadable ; Sir George Forrest *Clive* is badly arranged. For the controversies centering on Hastings' actions the reader may be referred to Sir James Stephen, Sir John Stratchy, H. Beveridge, Burke and Macaulay. For Hastings' impeachment, see the contemporary full report published by Debrett. *The Oxford History* is almost uniformly unsatisfactory on Hastings ; Miss Sydney Grier is a special pleader but informing ; Mr. P. E. Roberts is good.' (Garreatt & Thompson p. 666.) Penderel Moon's *Warren Hastings* is the latest and most impartial account of the achievements of Warren Hastings. This is well written, readable and fully documented. For the Anglo-Mysore Wars under Warren Hastings and Tipu, the primary authorities consist of Wilks' *History of Mysore* and for Cornwalli's campaign A. Dirom (*Narrative of the campaign*) and for the last campaign A. Beatson's *View of the origin and conduct of the war with Tippoo Sultan.* Roberts's *India under Wellesley* has not yet been

superseded by any other recent publication on the subject. The correspondence of most Governors-General has been published ; Cornwallis correspondence has been edited by Denison Ross in two volumes ; Wellesley's despatches, edited by Montgomery Martin, and the Duke of Wellington's, edited by S. J. Owen, are illuminating and instructive. The administration of East India Company has been well tackled by a band of scholars like Kaye and others. Keith's *Constitutional History of India* has become a classic.

The first half of the 19th century offers great scope and opportunity for research workers, as the materials have not been properly tapped, and only a few full-length biographies of the leading actors have been published. H. T. Prinsep's *History of the Political and Military Transactions in India during the Administration of the Marquess of Hastings* is a solid piece of work, in which the achievements of Hastings are vividly described in a simple and direct style. 'Kaye's *Life of Metcalfe* is a good solid Victorian biography with plenty of letters and minutes quoted in full. Edward Thompson's is much more likely to appeal to the general reader, but there is a tolerable deal of Thompson to every penny worth of Metcalfe' (Philip Woodruff). Malcolm and Grant Duff have become classics and are familiar to all students. We also need detailed biographies of Lord Amherst and Lord William Bentinck. Besides the *Political Proceedings of the Government of India* at the India Office and the National Archives, there are the *Ellenborough papers* in the Public Record Office, and the *Auckland and Broughton papers* in the British Museum. The number of contemporary publications is voluminous and includes works by Havelock, Outram and Burns. The literature on Afghan Wars is also abundant. Sir H.M. Durand published his work *The First Afghan War and its Causes* and was followed by Havelock's *Narrative* and J. W. Kaye's *History of the War in Afghanistan*. 'Kaye, like Colonel Wilks on Mysore, is an admirable writer, excellent reading and excellent history' (Garratt and Thompson). Lord Colchester's *History of the Indian Administration of Lord Ellenborough* gives official letters only ; Sir Algernon Law's *India under Lord Ellenborough* is also valuable. The literature on Indo-Sikh history is also voluminous. J. D. Cunningham's *History of the Sikhs* is a masterly survey of the subject. He had neither the opportunity to consult the original records nor the inclination to carry on a sustained and

laborious inquiry. There are also some valuable books by travellers e.g. by Drew and Vigne. Syad Muhammad Latif's *History of the Punjab* and W. M. Gregor's *History of the Sikhs* supplement the information of the above works. H.R. Gupta's *History of the Sikhs* may also be consulted. The life of Ranajeet Singh has evoked the interest of both the contemporary as well as modern historians. Sir Lepel Griffin's little book and Hon. W. Osborne's *The Court and Camp of Ranajeet Singh* are contemporary works on Ranajeet Singh. N. K. Sinha's *Ranajeet Singh* is the latest biography. The articles of Sita Ram Kohli on the army of Ranajeet Singh in the pages of the Journal of Indian History are also worth mentioning in this respect. The Punjab Government Records which have been published include important material relating to the *Delhi Residency and Agency*, 1807-1857 ; *The Ludhiana Agency* 1808-1815, and *The Lahore Political Diaries* 1847-9. At present, Sardar Ganda Singh has been actively conducting research on the various problems of Indo-Sikh History. His recently published '*The Punjab in* 1839-40' is a good collection of records of the time of Ranajeet Singh.

A number of works exist on the Administration of Dalhousie and the Mutiny; J. A. Baird's *Private letters of the Marquess of Dalhousie*, Sir Edwin Arnold's *Marquiss of Dalhousie's Administration* and Sir W. Lee Warner's *Life of the Marquiss of Dalhousie* are worth mentioning. On the Sepoy War of 1857 Kaye and Malleson's book is still regarded as the best general history. Books like Cooper's *The Crisis in the Punjab*, W. H. Russel's *My diary in India*, G. O. Trevelyon's *Cawnpore* should not be neglected. 'This literature is enormous ; and it can be supplemented by biographies, which exist of all the great soldiers who either won fame now or began careers which led to fame hereafter.'

The nine decades that followed the assumption of direct rule in India by the British Crown constitute the most formative period of Modern Indian History. The establishment of a centralized government which firmly maintained law and order throughout the country, the progressive improvement in the means of communication both within the country and outside, the spread of the new education on Western lines leading to the rise of an official and professional class with a common outlook were powerful factors that promoted the political unification of the country. British policy was governed by the operation of two rival and

opposite motives ; on the one side was the liberal wish to hold India as a trust to be returned to its people at the proper time ; on the other the natural conservative desire to put off the day of reckoning as far as possible, to be in no hurry to let go the brightest jewel in the British Crown. The gradual Indianisation of the higher government services in response to the growing and insistent demand of the 'educated Indians,' the introduction and development of representative institutions, slow and halting at first, but more rapid and definitive since 1909 under the stimulus of claims based on the progress of self-government in the colonies are proof of the liberal view at work. After the first instalment of constitutional reform in 1909, the first World War and the new political technique of Mahatma Gandhi quickened the pace of advance and the constitution was revised again (1919) and India set on the road to parliamentary government. The conservative reaction to this rapidly changing situation was to nurse the claims of the hundreds of 'Indian States' and of the minority communities, particularly the Muslims ; this was clearly seen in the federal constitution of 1935, forced by the attitude of the Congress to the constitution of 1919. The exhaustion of Britain after the Second World War, the 'Quit India' demand raised by Gandhi even when the war was on and pressed after its cessation, and the formation of the first Labour Government in Britain with a clear majority in the House of Commons led to the recognition of India's claims to political independence, though this was coupled with a partition of the country into two sovereign States to satisfy the intransigent demand of Jinnah and his followers for a separate Muslim State. Whether the pace of political and constitutional advance thus forced by several concurrent causes, internal and external, has outrun the social conditions and technical resources of the country, and whether the partition could have been avoided by more patient statesmanship are questions that may not ever be answered alike by all.

'The post-Mutiny literature is mostly reflective or explanatory, and not so largely narrative as the literature dealing with the exciting events which resulted in the full establishment of British rule everywhere. We now get abundant autobiographical material, the practice having become usual of writing your reminiscences after retirement, even if you had done little beyond big game shooting. Most of these books, however, contain something of

historical value, and a considerable proportion justify their publication. Official documents now keep a high standard. Gazetteers, reports, are often excellent, though their authors had no thought of producing literature.' (Garratt and Thompson p. 668).

The above period must be studied with great caution, as the nearer we approach the present times, the greater is the temptation to mix up history with politics. Historians must be careful when they deal with problems which are the catch-words of political parties.

'This period has been traced in the colourless biographies and memoirs of the time. We have the *Parliamentary papers* of the period and the biographies, the contemporary documents and the secondary works which are familiar to students of Modern Indian History. There are also biographies of many Indian statesmen and books of reminiscences, some of which are available in English. There is a *Life* of Michael Madhusudan Datta, the father of Modern Bengali Poetry and Drama. There are also *Lives* of all post-Mutiny Viceroys, and some of these were men of letters. The autobiographies and reminiscences of some of the contemporary Viceroys provide a useful source of information to understand the currents and cross-currents of the times. Lord Curzon's monumental *British Government in India* contains much information difficult to obtain elsewhere.' (Garratt & Thomson). Roberts's *Forty-one years in India*, Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea's *A Nation in the Making*, Edwin Montagu's *An Indian Diary* contain some useful information on contemporary history ; for the achievements of the Indian National Congress, we have voluminous records of the proceedings of the Congress. They have been examined by Pattabhi Sita Ramaiah in his monumental work *The History of Indian National Congress* in two volumes. The writings of Tilak, Gandhi and Mrs. Beasant also provide some information on this period. Two distinguished Journalists, Lovat Fraser and Sir V. Chirol wrote on the achievements of Lord Curzon and on the Congress achievements before the first World War, but they have become out-dated now. Since their time the flood of political and journalistic works has been increasing. Reginald Coupland's works may be supplemented by Babu Rajendra Prasad's admirable book *India Divided*. *The Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon* by S. Gopal is worth noticing also.

The British administration has been surveyed by a host of

scholars like Hunter, Sir Alfred Lyall, and Sir Richard Temple. A. B. Keith's Work on *Indian Constitutional History* (already noticed) is the most authoratative and well documented book on the constitutional development and administration of pre-independent India. The problem of the Indian States has been well tackled by Lee Warner and K. M. Panikkar. The Indian Nationalist Movement has been well traced in Laj Pat Rai's *Unhappy India* and Mrs. Besant's *How India Wrought for Freedom*. The Government of India has decided to bring out a scientific history of the story of Indian Freedom Struggle, mainly based on the official reports, newspapers and proceedings of the Congress.

Such is the outline of the different sources for the study of the History of Modern India from 17th to 20th century.

CHAPTER V

DEVELOPMENT OF INDIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY

1. Bhandarkar, R.G.
2. Beveridge.
3. Buhler.
4. Coedes, George.
5. Cunningham, Alexander.
6. Elphinstone, Mountstuart.
7. Fergusson.
8. Fleet, J.F.
9. Grousset.
10. Hultzsch.
11. Kielhorn.
12. Max Muller.
13. Mill, James.
14. Rapson, E.J.
15. Rice, B.L.
16. Sardesai.
17. Sirkar, Jaudunath.
18. Smith, Vincent.
19. Sylvain Levi.
20. Wilson, H.H.

The Development of Indian Historiography

In the task of unveiling the wisdom of the East, the services of Western as well as Eastern orientalists can hardly be underestimated. It was during the days of Warren Hastings that the first impetus was given to oriental research and a devoted band of scholars under the lead of Sir William Jones founded the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784. Colebrooke and Wilson followed his tradition and enriched the Proceedings of Society with their contributions, with a view to popularize the abstruse scriptures of the Hindus and the Sanskrit classics. Every branch of oriental thought came to be explored from a new approach, marked by the critical methods of science.

The decipherment of the ancient Brahmi script by James Prinsep with the aid of some Indo-Greek coins in 1837 opened a fruitful epoch in the study of Indian antiquity. James Fergusson

first described the Rock-cut temples of India in 1845, and published his monumental *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* in 1875. General Sir Alexander Cunningham and Dr. James Burgess laid the foundations of Indian archaeology on sound lines (1862-90). Ancient Indian literature was studied and interpreted with great acumen by Burnouf, Max Muller, Lassen, Oldenberg, Kielhorn, Buhler, and several other scholars ; Bhagawanlal Indraji, R.L. Mitra, Sir R.G. Bhandarkar, and other Indian scholars besides Fleet, Rice, Griffith, Haug and other Europeans working in India contributed their own quotas ; the results of all this work which threw a flood of light on ancient Indian history and culture were drawn together in Smith's *Early History of India* (1904) which furnished a dependable chronological framework for the first time. Medieval and modern Indian history naturally attracted attention earlier. Orme's *Transactions of the British Nation in Indoostan* (1763-78), Wilks's *Historical Sketches of Mysore*, Grant-Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*, Elphinstone's *History of India*, and Mill's *History of British India* are all rightly regarded as classics. Tod's *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* is a magnificent work which suitably enshrined the annals of Rajput chivalry and exerted a wide influence on literature and drama. Mention must also be made of the monumental collection of Persian chronicles by Elliot and Dowson in the *History of India as told by its own Historians* (1867-77) and Hodivala's *Studies in Indo-Muslim History* (1939). The discovery of India's past had a large part in the promotion of Indian nationalist sentiment which manifested itself sometimes in an exaggerated stress on 'Hindu Superiority,' or 'Indian Spirituality,' though generally the feeling did not exceed the limits of a restrained and legitimate pride in the venerable age and continuity of India's civilization. The discovery of the enigmatic urban culture of the Indus valley (Mohenjo Daro and Harappa) in the twenties of the present century has gone some way to accentuate the feeling. An attempt is made in the following pages to give a brief sketch of the life and the services rendered by some of the European and Indian orientalists towards the elucidation of India's heritage.

1. *Dr. R.G. Bhandarkar*

Among the oriental scholars, no name is held in greater veneration than that of Sir Ramakrishna Gopal Bhandarkar. Dr. Bhandarkar was a great Sanskrit savant, reformer and revivalist.

He was born in 1837 of poor Maharastra Brahmin parents. His education began in the Elphinstone College of Bombay in 1853. His early life and career is a source of deep inspiration to young men of India. Later he worked as a Professor of Oriental languages for some years in the Elphinstone College, Bombay. He retired from Government service in 1893.

The literary activity of Dr. Bhandarkar is almost coeval with the starting of the 'Indian Antiquary.' He was for a long time member of the Bombay branch of the Royal Asiatic Society. He contributed noted articles such as 'The Age of Patanjali,' 'The Age of Mahabharata' and 'Veda in India' to the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.

Bhandarkar's name was widely spread soon after the publication of his brilliant article 'The Nasik Inscriptions' in the 'Transactions of Oriental Congress 1874.' The collected reports on sanskrit manuscripts of Dr. Bhandarkar form vast store houses of historic information on a variety of topics. His reports are quoted with profound respect by all scholars, both European and Indian.

Dr. Bhandarkar published his finest historical work '.Early History of the Deccan' in 1884. It embodies his considered views on the chronology of the various periods in the Deccan history.

To commemorate the name and work of Dr. Bhandarkar, some of his disciples and admirers started an Oriental Institute in Poona towards the middle of 1915 which is now known as 'The Bhandarkar Institute.'

2. *Beveridge*

Henry Beveridge, an English advocate, published in 1862 a comprehensive History of India based as much as possible on original and official sources. It is a work in three large volumes, and its full title is worth reproduction as it is a fair indication of its scope : 'A Comprehensive History of India, Civil Military and Social, from the first landing of the English to the suppression of the Sepoy Revolt, including an outline of the Early History of Hindoostan.' The early history is not of much value now, but the rest of the book is a monument of popular and at the same time authoritative writing, quite outspoken in its criticisms of the Company and its policies. The book is also very richly illustrated.

3. *Dr. Buhler* 1837-1898.

An Indianist of a very wide range of acquirements and the

very centre and chief promoter of Indological studies in Europe, Dr. Buhler was one whose activity has decidedly determined the progress of Indian research. The son of a clergyman and born at Borstel, 19th July 1837, Dr. Buhler received his early education in the public school at Hanover. In 1855, he entered the University of Gottingen. In 1858, at London, he became acquainted with Prof. Max Muller and the acquaintance soon ripened into intimate friendship. Through the latter's influence, he got an appointment in the Elphinstone College, Bombay, as Professor of Oriental Languages. In 1880, he was appointed to the chair of Sanskrit and Indology in the University of Vienna. It was amidst the congenial atmosphere of the Vienna University that he planned and partly completed the *Encyclopedia of Indo-Aryan Research*, the greatest enterprise yet undertaken in the field of oriental scholarship. A man of vast influence, friend of all and enemy of none, Buhler soon enlisted for his work, the co-operation of 30 different scholars in various parts of the world and the work was pushed through rapidly enough. The series contemplates to furnish all knowledge about the Indo-Aryans—their history, religion, philosophy. Under his editorship nine parts appeared including his own contribution on *Indian Palaeography*.

His other literary activities were all concerned with comparative philology and Vedic mythology and these were contributed to '*Orient and Occident*' edited by Buhler's own master, Prof. Benfey. The next great milestone in the road of literary activity of Buhler was the inauguration of *Bombay Sanskrit Series* in conjunction with Prof. Keilhorn, who was then in Poona. 'The object of the series was to give young native scholars an opportunity of learning European methods of criticism in editing texts and to procure cheap and good editions of Sanskrit standard works for use in Indian Schools and Colleges.' Besides editing the four books of *Pañchatantra*, he brought out for the same series the first part of Dandin's *Dasakumaracharita*. In 1875 he edited the historical romance of Bilhana, *Vikramankadeva Charita* which he himself had discovered. Quite early in his Indian career in 1867 in co-operation with Sir Raymond West, he produced the famous *Digest of Hindu Law*. In 1886 followed his translation of the *Laws of Manu* in the Sacred Books of the East edited by Max Muller. His range of scholarship included even the history of Sanskrit Literature. The necessity to fix mile-stones in the long history of Sanskrit literature

led Buhler to a critical study of inscriptions, which, in turn resulted in the elucidation of the Hindu Period of Indian History. His 85 articles in the Indian Antiquary mostly bear on the interpretation of Indian historical documents and it may safely be asserted that, during his time, no one did more in this branch of Indian research. The results of his epigraphic studies are to be found in two of his masterly treatises, on *Indian Brahmi Alphabet* and on *Indian Palaeography* (with 9 tables), works of great value still.

He has rendered valuable service to the cause of Indian Religious History. European and Indian interest regarding one of the earliest religious systems of India, Jainism, dates from Buhler's discovery of manuscripts pertaining to that faith. More than 500 texts and Jaina Prakrit manuscripts were discovered and purchased by Buhler and these were despatched to Berlin where it had the effect of awakening German scholars to almost unprecedented literary activity. Berlin became a centre of Jaina philology. 'Buhler had the true nature of a scholar—accurate, incisive, critical in his own work, helpful, kindly and stimulating to others.' (C. H. Tawney).

4. *George Coedes*.

The foremost living authority on the history and archaeology of Indo-China. He is one of those scholars of the present generation who have been steadily working on the impact of Ancient Indian Culture on the Far Eastern countries. He is a great linguist. He has mastered Sanskrit, Khmer, Mon and Malay as well as the modern European languages. He is a prolific writer. He was for many years the Director of the French School of Archaeology at Hanoi, and contributed scores of articles on the different subjects of cultural expansion of India to the Bulletin of the French Archaeological Commission of Indo-China. He is a leading contributor to the 'Bulletin of Hanoi school.' He is engaged in editing the Corpus of Kambujan Inscriptions. And he has stated the main conclusions of his studies of many years in the comprehensive book called *The Hinduised States of Indo-China and Indonesia*, first published in Hanoi in 1944 and subsequently in a revised form as a volume in the French History of the World issued from Paris.

5. *Alexander Cunningham*, 1814-1893

The value of A. Cunningham's contribution to Indian Historical Research cannot be exaggerated. He was one of the

great pioneers who had to contend against not only prejudice and ignorance but also many other difficulties in the pursuit of a branch of learning that was then considered to be fruitless and unprofitable. He may be truly said to be the founder and father of Indian Archaeology.

Son of Allan Cunningham, born in 1814 and educated at Christ's Hospital, he reached India in 1833. He was the Executive Engineer at Gwalior and was a field Engineer in the Sikh wars. In 1862, he was appointed the Director of Archaeology in India and his function was 'to superintend a complete search over the whole country and a systematic record and description of all architectural and other remains that are remarkable alike for their antiquity or their beauty, or their historic interest.' Cunningham published annual reports which contained personal descriptions of archaeological tours in specially interesting districts undertaken between 1862 and 1884; here is a great mass of information, systematized to some extent, according to the light then available. Each volume embodied the results of a single tour, published two or three years after the tour had been made. Cunningham's reports aimed at exhaustiveness and thus in their time were believed to carry a certain final authority. In their entirety these twenty-three volumes bring together the results of the Survey of the Central and Northern part of India, at which General Cunningham and his assistants worked patiently for nearly a quarter of century.

Apart from the official reports of his annual tours and his occasional contributions to the Asiatic Society of Bengal's Journals, he edited the Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum I—*Asoka Inscriptions* and wrote the *Bhilsa Topes*, the *Ancient Geography of India*, based on the Itineraries of Chinese travellers, the *Stupa of Barhut*, the *Book of Indian Eras* and *Mahabodhi*. After his retirement, he paid much attention to numismatics on which he was an eminent authority. In these and other respects, General Cunningham was truly a great pioneer, with an almost uncanny instinct for arriving at the truth, even when, as sometimes happened, his reasoning was at fault.

6. *Elphinstone*, 1779-1859

While Mountstuart Elphinstone has been rightly regarded as one of the eminent founders of the British Indian Empire, his writings have long remained unavailable for study, although they

can by no means be considered less valuable than those, for instance, of Munro and Wellesley. Sir George Forrest published in 1844 a small sketchy volume of his 'Minutes and Official writings,' and the same year appeared two volumes of his life by T.E.Colebrooke. But they do not do justice to his remarkable career which in those days of advance in historical research one would like to examine critically from original sources.

Buckland in his *Dictionary of Indian Biography* gives a long account about Elphinstone of which the following is an excerpt: 'born 6th October 1779, educated at the High School Edinburgh, went out to Bengal as a writer, stationed at Benares where he had to ride for his life when some European officers including the Governor-General's Agent Cherry were murdered by order of Vazir Ali in January 1799. In 1801 he was appointed Assistant to Barry Close, the Resident at Poona. From 1804-8 he was Resident at Nagpur, when he was sent as envoy to the Afghan monarch Shah Shuja who received him at Peshawar on March 5, 1809. Upon his return from this mission towards the end of 1810 he was posted to the Residency at Poona, and after the conquest of the Peshwa's territories he became the Governor of Bombay, which post he held for eight years. He wrote *An account of the kingdom of Cabul and its Dependencies in Persia, Tartary and India*, 1815. It is more a diplomatic work. He wrote his *History of India* in 1841, for which he was called the Tacitus of modern historians and *the Rise of British Power in the East* edited in 1887 by Sir E. Colebrooke. He was not ambitious, occupied his time with study and maintained his interest in Indian affairs, being regarded as the Nestor of Indian Statemanship. He was a Vice-President of the Royal Asiatic Society. He combined through life a keenness for field sports with his love of books and the despatch of public business.' The character of Elphinstone, at a later date, when he was governing Bombay, is best sketched by Bishop R. Heber in his journal under the date 15th August 1825.

'Mr. Elphinstone is in every respect an extra-ordinary man, possessing great activity of mind and body, remarkable talent for and application to public business, a love of literature and a degree of almost universal information such as I have met with in no other person similarly situated, and manners and conversation of the most amicable and interesting character. While he has been

engaged in active political and sometimes military duties since the age of eighteen, he has found time not only to cultivate the languages of Hindustan and Persia, but to preserve and extend his acquaintance with the Greek and Latin classics, with the French and Italian, with all the elder and more distinguished English writers and with the current and popular literature of the day, in poetry and history, politics and political economy. No Government in India pays so much attention to schools and public institutions for education. He is one of the ablest and most amicable men I ever met with.'

7. *James Fergusson*, 1808-1886.

Forgusson was a great pioneer in the realm of Indian Art and Architecture. He was the son of Dr. William Fergusson. He was born in 1808. In his early age, he came to India. During the years 1835-1842 he went on long tours visiting various localities in India containing or reputed to contain architectural remains and gathering materials for his projected works on the Art and Architecture of India. He joined the Royal Asiatic Society in 1840. He contributed brilliant papers on 'The Rock-cut temples of South India,' 'Ancient Buddhist Architecture in India' and so on. In 1855 his great work 'Illustrated Hand-book of Architecture' was undertaken at the request of John Murray. This was afterwards enlarged into four closely printed volumes, the last being the *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* (1876). This work of Fergusson not merely satisfies the reader who takes it up with a view to satisfy his æsthetic tastes but it aims at the broader and deeper task of illustrating and explaining in the full spirit of modern architectural enquiry the entire body of Indian history and progress.

One of the Fergusson's greatest contributions to the realm of thought was his '*Tree and Serpent Worship*,' a monumental work prepared under the authority of the Secretary of State for India and published by the India Office in 1868. Fergusson was the first to point out that the serpent played an important part in the mythology of India and that its worship not only prevailed but considerably influenced such faiths as Jainism, Buddhism and Vaishnavism. He died in 1886, loved and respected by all who knew him intimately. 'A remarkable figure, a versatile genius, one of the most prominent writers of the day upon the recondite subject of Architecture, Mr. James Fergusson will ever be remem-

bered for the signal services he has rendered to the cause of pure historical studies.

8. *J.F. Fleet*, 1847-1917.

A prince among the epigraphist-historians of India, Dr. Fleet occupied during his life-time the position of a founder and leader of Indian historical studies. A perfect master of Sanskrit literature, Dr. Fleet had a thorough grasp of the Kannada language in its old and medieval forms. This enabled him to collect the vast mass of Sanskrit and old Kanarese inscriptions, of which the Bombay Presidency was full, and month after month throughout the thirty years of his stay in India, he was educating the learned world by editing and interpreting these inscriptions. That Indian chronology is firmly fixed, that the science of Epigraphy itself has progressed by leaps and bounds is very largely due to him.

He came to Bombay in 1867 and entered the revenue and executive branch of the Government of India. In 1872, he was appointed as the educational inspector in charge of the southern districts of the Bombay Presidency. In 1883, through the influence of Alexander Cunningham and Mr. Gibbs, Dr. Fleet was appointed as the Epigraphical Superintendent of Bombay Presidency. Later he became the Commissioner of Southern and Central Provinces. In 1897, he left India and settled permanently at Ealing and died in 1917. His first literary undertaking on a large scale was the publication for the India Office of a volume entitled 'Pali, Sanskrit and Old Kanarese Inscriptions.' This useful and scholarly collection was later on followed by the publication of his '*Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings and their successors*'. This formed volume III of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, a splendid monument of exact scholarship and critical judgement, which by establishing the epoch of the Gupta Dynasty in 319-20 A.D. provided the key-stone of Indian chronology.

The next important publication of Dr. Fleet was '*The Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts*' incorporated in the Bombay Gazetteer Vol. I, Part II. Like R.G. Bhandarkar's *Early History of Deccan*, it is a source book by itself.

His fame as an indologist rests, however, not on the publication of the works we have mentioned above but on the endless series of epigraphic notes and historical notices in the pages of *Indian Antiquary*. Between 1875 and 1891 he gave to the world of oriental scholarship 196 critically edited Sanskrit and old Kanarese inscrip-

tions, together with disquisitions on the dates, pedigrees and facts disclosed by them. Between 1892 and 1910 he wrote largely on ancient place names and the identifications of their sites. Of his work and its value, thus writes Dr. Fleet himself :

'I can only express the hope that writers who may wish to quote me will look to my later writings in preference to earlier ones.'

9. *Grousset*—Died in 1952.

He was the director of Musée Guimet, Paris for many years. He was a great humanist and shrewd art critic. He was one of the leading French-Indologists in the first half of the 20th century in Europe. *In the Footsteps of the Buddha*, (an English version of his *Sur les traces du Buddha*,) is at once the most sympathetic and illuminating interpretation of Huien-Tsang and a fine commentary on the state of contemporary Hindu culture, in Central Asia. Besides numerous papers on eastern subjects, he wrote a two volume *Histoire de l'Extreme-Orient* which is remarkable for the bibliographical notes it contains. In a series of 4 books constituting the *Civilizations of the East* series, he dealt with the Art of Iran, India, China and Japan.

10. *Hultzsch*, 1857-1926

Hultzsch was one of the greatest epigraphists of India. He was born in Dresden on 29th March 1857. He graduated in 1874 in the University of Leipzig and studied classics and oriental languages in Bonn. In 1882, he came into contact with Buhler in Vienna. In 1886, he was appointed Epigraphist to the Government of Madras, a position which he held till he became Professor of Sanskrit in Halle in 1903.

The first literary work which he published after his first dissertation was an edition of the *Baudhayana Dharma Sastra*, Leipzig 1884, which he dedicated to Buhler. He was assistant editor of the Epigraphia Indica Volume I, 1892 and sole editor of volumes III—VIII and IX, pp. 1 to 144. He published three volumes of *South Indian Inscriptions*, *Madras*, 1890-1903 and finally the monumental edition of the *Inscriptions of Asoka* in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum Vol. I*, Oxford 1925. He was an accomplished Sanskrit and Prakrit scholar, and was familiar with the chief Dravidian languages. Also *Kavya* and *Nyaya* claimed his interest. He edited Kalidasa's *Meghaduta* with Vallabhadeva's commentary, London 1911.

'They are all characterised by critical acumen, unbiassed reasoning, scrupulous accuracy and solid learning. Such qualities made him eminently suited for epigraphical work, and when Indian Epigraphy has at the present day reached such a high stage, a large share in the merit belongs to him. His writings throughout bear witness to the urbanity and gentleman-like frame of mind, which endeared him to everybody who came into near contact with him.' (Sten Konow).

11. *Kielhorn,* 1840-1927.

Kielhorn is one of the pillars of Indian Epigraphy. Born in 1840, he was educated at Gottingen. He took his Doctor's degree at Leipzig. In India, he was the Superintendent of Sanskrit Studies in the Deccan College, Poona. In conjunction with Buhler, he founded the Bombay Sanskrit Series and also with Buhler, he initiated the work connected with the search for Sanskrit manuscripts in Western India. On the death of Buhler in 1898, he succeeded in taking over charge of the responsible and laborious duties of editor of the German Encyclopaedia of Indo-Aryan Research written by various scholars in Germany, Great Britain, India and America. He has given us, in the department, at the request of the Bombay Government, *A Sanskrit Grammar* which ran through four editions and is a standard guide for those who seek an introduction to the language according to the western method. We owe to him a fine edition of the *Mahabhashya* of Patanjali in the Bombay Sanskrit series.

There is another line in which he established a reputation. About 1883 his attention was attracted to the ancient inscriptions of India. From 1886 onwards his labours were, in fact, chiefly devoted to epigraphic work. He edited a large number of Sanskrit inscriptions, from all parts of India, in the *Indian Antiquary* and in the *Epigraphia Indica*. In illustration of what his wide knowledge of Indian literature enabled him to do in this line, we may point in particular to his treatment of the *Aihole Inscription of Pulakesin II*, of the *Talagunda Inscription of Kakusthavarman* and of the *Junagad Inscription of Rudradaman.* He also applied himself largely to elucidating the subject of the various Hindu eras and other reckonings chiefly in articles which appeared in the Indian Antiquary from 1888 to 1896. In this department we may further point to his *Lists of the Inscriptions of Northern and Southern India*, published as Appendices to volumes 5 and 7 of the Epigraphia Indica. These

lists, with their supplements and the synchronistic tables of the Dynasties in volume 8 must always form the basis of work for any one applying himself to the history of India from fourth century onwards.

'We have lost, in Prof. Kielhorn, not simply a great scholar who will not easily be replaced, but one who was esteemed and loved by any one who had the privilege of coming into personal contact with him. He was the beau-ideal of both a scholar and a teacher. He was painstaking, complete, accurate in everything that he took in hand.' (*J. F. Fleet.*)

12. *Max Muller*

In the realm of Indian literature, Max Muller's name is of great importance. He was the son of a German lyric poet and was born in 1823. He took his education in the University of Leipzig in 1841. He was an eager and laborious scholar and took to the study of Sanskrit as his life's passion.

Max Muller's luminous conception of and his devotion to the science of language are among his greatest qualities. In his *Biographical Essays* he points out how the tie of language is the strongest and dearest of ties. Again his depth and range of vision in regard to the panorama of human development are equally remarkable. He acquired the same by studying the science of language and the science of religion.

Coming to the works of Max Muller, his *Biographical Essays* occupy a prominent place. We are able to grasp from these essays how Max Muller had a nature full of the noblest impulses, generous and loving in his estimates of men. His devotion to the study of Comparative Philology also finds ample expression in this volume as in his other works. Max Muller gives in this volume the biography of eminent personalities such as Rajah Ram Mohan Roy, Keshavachandra Sen and Dayananda Saraswati, in a lucid manner. The volume deals also with two Buddhist priests, Colebrooke, Dr. Mohl Bunsen, and Kingsley.

'*India ! What can it teach us*' is a famous volume containing Max Muller's lectures delivered before the University of Cambridge. The book is one of great charm and value.

'*History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*' is a valuable book that has come from Max Muller's pen and in it he deals with the Hindu sacred scriptures with insight and learning.

'*The Six System of Indian Philosophy*' is another great work

of Max Muller. In his preface he speaks of the Vedanta Philosophy as 'a system in which human speculation seems to me to have reached its very acme.' His object is 'to give a more comprehensive account of the philosophical activity of the Indian nation from the earliest times, and to show how intimately not only their religion but their philosophy also, was connected with the national character of the inhabitants of India.'

Another work is '*Three lectures on Vedanta.*' As the title itself suggests, the book contains three lectures delivered at the Royal Institution in March 1894. In the first lecture he deals with the origin of the Vedanta philosophy. The second lecture deals with the soul and god, while the third deals with the similarities and differences between Indian and European philosophy. His magnificent edition of the Rigveda with Sayana's commentary was undertaken at the suggestion of Burnouf.

Max Muller has given his ideas about the relation of language and thought in his book '*The Siletian Horse-herd.*' Other great works of Max Muller are : '*The Science of Religion,*' '*The Science of Thought*' and '*The Science of Mythology.*' But by far the most important evidence of his oriental scholarship was the monumental series known as 'The Sacred Books of the East.' It was a magnificent conception to bring the whole of oriental knowledge in a series of encyclopaedic volumes. Canon Farrar has summed up his life's work admirably by saying that he introduced and popularised Comparative Philology, that he showed the importance of Sanskrit, that he edited the Rigveda, and that he introduced into England the Science of Comparative Religion.

13. *James Mill,* 1773-1836

Among the older generation of historians, from whom historical research may well expect substantial contributions to the exploitation and elucidation of the knotty problems in the domain of research, we have no hesitation in stating that James Mill will hold the premier place. There is that atmosphere of scholarly brilliance about him, that attracts towards him many an ardent young inquirer, with confidence. He was born in 1773 ; son of a shoe maker, educated at Montrose Academy and Edinburgh University, he studied philosophy. He was the friend of Bentham and George Grote, and held pronounced views on political economy and utilitarianism. He was appointed to the India Office in 1819 as an Assistant Examiner of Correspondence and by 1830

was at the head of the office. He was the father of John Stuart Mill.

The greatest literary work of Mill is his *History of British India*. In the preface to this book, Mill has claimed for himself the merits of patient and laborious investigation and of original and independent judgement. The claim is substantiated by the work. His history is remarkable for extensive and diligent research and for opinions which are peculiar either to the author or to the school of which he was a distinguished disciple. The fourth edition of the book was edited by H.H. Wilson with notes and continuation. Mill takes the narrative up to the close of the 18th century. With regard to the facts of his history, the sources of information were more scanty and less pure than the historian suspected. 'With very imperfect knowledge, with an implicit faith in all testimony hostile to Hindu pretensions, he has elaborated a portrait of the Hindus which has no resemblance whatever to the original and which almost outrages humanity' (Wilson). 'But notwithstanding the imputations which have been urged to its disadvantage, the editor regards the history of Mr. Mill as the most valuable work upon the subject which has yet been published. It is a composition of great industry, of extensive information, of much accuracy, on many points, of unrelaxing vigour on all' (Wilson).

14. *E.J. Rapson,* 1861-1937.

E. J. Rapson was born at Leicester on 12th May 1861. Placed in the First Class of the Classical Tripos in 1883, he turned to Indian Studies. In 1887, he entered the British Museum as an Assistant in the Department of Coins, while his mastery of the Kharosthi alphabet pointed him out as the one to whom the task of editing the documents brought back by Dr. Aurel Stein from Chinese Turkistan in 1901 should be entrusted. In 1906, Rapson was elected to the Chair of Sanskrit at Cambridge. When the Cambridge History of India was planned by the University Press, Rapson was the obvious editor for its first two volumes. He was still able to give time to his professional work, and in 1920, the Clarendon Press published the first volume of Kharosthi Inscriptions discovered by M. A. Stein in Chinese Turkistan, which he had edited in collaboration with N.M. Boyer and E. Senart. The same editors produced volume II in 1927 and volume III followed in 1929, edited by Rapson and his pupil

Prof. P. Noble.

In the field of Numismatics, Rapson's work is distinguished by accuracy and completeness. His first book on the subject is '*Indian Coins*' in Buhler's *Grundriss* (1897) which summarises what was then known of Indian numismatics for the period before the Muslim conquest of Northern India. It is an admirable guide to the subject and is specially valuable for its bibliographical references. In 1908, after he had left the museum, was published his *Catalogue of the Coins of Andhra Dynasty, the Western Satraps, the Traikutaka Dynasty and the 'Bodhi' Dynasty in the British Museum.* The catalogue in an excellent piece of work which still remains the standard account of the dynasties.

His three chapters in *Cambridge History of India Vol. I* on Indian Native States after the period of the Maurya Dynasty, on the Successors of Alexander the Great, and on the Scythian and Parthian invaders are models of the treatment of numismatic material for history where written records are scanty or fail completely. While editing the Cambridge History, Rapson published a little book on *Ancient India* (1914) which is an excellent primer on the subject, with valuable notes on topography. His work as editor of the Cambridge History of India Vol. I which appeared in 1922, is marked by all the special qualities which distinguish him. The second volume on Medieval India was planned by him and much work had been done by him on the chapters written by other contributors. His untimely death before he had completed all the chapters which he intended to write himself has caused a great loss.

15. *B.L.Rice*, 1837-1927.

B. L. Rice was one of those European orientalists who were largely responsible for the rescue of the Mysore history of ancient times from oblivion. He was one of the pioneer workers of acknowledged merit in Indian studies. Having acquainted himself with Mysore at a very early age in life, he held the posts successively of Head Master of the Central High School at Bangalore, Inspector of Schools in Mysore and Coorg (1865-1868), Director of Public Instruction in the Mysore State (1868-1883), Secretary to the Education Department of Mysore Government and finally became the Director of Archaeological Researches in 1890. A detailed epigraphic survey of the State was started and the results were published by the time he laid down his office in 1906.

The most important piece of work done by Mr. Rice was the collection of nearly 9000 inscriptions. *The Epigraphia Carnatica* series, initiated in 1886, contains twelve large volumes which are an indispensable source of information for the history of the Deccan. The general results of these collections were summarised in a separate volume entitled *Mysore and Coorg from the Inscriptions*. Among Mr. Rice's discoveries may be mentioned the Minor Rock Edicts of Asoka in the north of Mysore, the Talagunda Pillar Inscription disclosing the history of the Kadamba dynasty, the Sravanabelgola Inscriptions, the Vokkaleri Plates throwing new light on the history of the Chalukyas and the Atakur lithic Record describing the relations between the Rashtrakutas, the Gangas and the Cholas.

Another great literary work of Rice was the publication of *Mysore Gazetteer* edited by him in 1877-1878 ; the Bibliotheca. Carnatica, a series of classical Kanarese works on poetry, grammar, rhetoric, begin in 1884 ; his *Coorg Inscriptions* appeared in 1886. He collected hundreds of manuscripts to preserve which the Government Oriental Library was founded at Mysore.

'A man of untiring industry, wide learning and earnest devotion to the pursuit of truth, he has rendered exceedingly great services to the cause of knowledge by the stimulus which he has given to historal and literary studies in South India' (L.D. Barnett).

16 & 17. *Jadunath Sirkar and Sardesai*

Among the living historians of India, the names of J.N.Sircar and Sardesai occupy a unique place in the realm of Mughul and Maratha History. If J.N. Sirkar is the pioneer in the Mughul historical studies, Sardesai has made the Maratha historical documents accessible to the students of Modern Indian History and written an epic account of the Maratha achievements in his *Marathi Riyasat* of which the English version in three volumes is styled *A New History of the Marathas*.

J. N. Sirkar is known to the world as the author of the monumental five volumes on the *History of Aurangzeb*. It is a work based on various original sources not to be easily surpassed. The first two volumes deal with the reign of Shahjahan ; the third with the political activities of Aurangzeb in North India from 1658-1681 ; the fourth volume deals with the activities of the emperor in Southern India 1645-1689 ; the last volume is devoted to the last phase of Aurangzeb's life (1698-1707). An abridged

version of this, entitled *A Short History of Aurangzeb* is also available. Besides being the biographer of Aurangzeb, J. N. Sirkar is the author of many more books on the different aspects of Mughul rule in India. His *Studies in Moghul India* is a collection of 22 historical essays on the many-sided activities of Mughul emperors. His *Anecdotes of Aurangzeb* is a brilliant exposition of many interesting stories connected with the life of Aurangzeb. In his *Moghul Administration*, he has given an admirable survey of the Administrative structure of the Mughul empire. He is also the author of *Sivaji and His Times*. This is an admirable sketch of the founder and father of the Maratha nation, Sivaji, mainly based on the diverse original sources. The contemporary Dutch, Portuguese, French and English records have been made use of in this book by the author. A third edition of the book, thoroughly revised and re-written, was brought out in 1930.

In 1940, Sirkar published another work by name *The House of Sivaji* which is a collection of all his writings on the Royal Period (1626-1700) to which are added a long life of Mallik Ambar (from original sources) and biographies of the four eminent pioneers of Marathi historical research, Rajawade, Sane, Khare and Parasnis. This is a necessary supplement to *Sivaji and His Times*, for all serious students of the subject. Sirkar is an honorary member of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain.

Sardesai is the doyen among modern historians. J. N. Sirkar, his friend and co-worker says of him and his works :

'From the unspeakable loneliness and utter vacuity of a forlorn old man's life, Govind Rao was saved by a force stronger even than Death, his passion for advancing the study of Maratha history on a scientific basis. He had begun his literary career in Baroda by making Marathi translations of Machiavelli's *Prince* and Seeley's *Expansion of England* which were published in the Baroda series in 1895. He then planned and composed his famous *Riyasat* works in Marathi about this time, with the object of diffusing higher knowledge in a popular form through the vernacular. Here his devotion to national History found an adequate expression in the form of a complete conspectus of the course of the Maratha rise and fall, from the beginnings under Sivaji to the dismal day when from the balcony of the Parvati temple the last Peshwa Baji Rao II looked helplessly on the ruins of his dynasty and the extinction of the independence of his people. This grand plan was

carried to completion under the title of *Marathi Riyasat* in nine volumes in the course of thirty years, the first volume having been published in 1901 and the last in 1932. Several of the volumes have gone into a second edition.' Sardesai himself says about the Riyasat :

'In it I tried to bring together the scattered, disarranged and un-calendared mass of historical data and opinions found in that tongue and, after comparing them with available materials in other languages, to construct a compact critical study of the rise and fall of the Modern Maratha State. My work too, like Rajwade's, remained unknown to the world ignorant of my native language. The present *New History of the Marathas* to be completed in three volumes, is the first attempt to present a fresh and full treatment of Maratha History in English, embodying the results of the latest research. It is not a translation of my *Marathi Riyasat* ; nor does it pretend to be a work of the ideal merits as described above. It is mostly made up of the utterances of the great figures who dominated the historic stage during the two centuries of our rise and fall. As a supplementary attempt, the reader's attention may be invited to the author's '*Main Currents of Maratha History*' published a few years ago. In it have been discussed some of the outstanding and debatable questions arising out of the past life of the Maratha People.'

The scientific collection and edition of the official records of the Peshwas or the *Peshwa Daftars*, about 27,000 bundles of Marathi manuscripts, in forty-five volumes is another monumental work of Sardesai. The unprinted material of minor historical importance has also been carefully sorted and rearranged for the convenience of future workers. 'It is an achievement that recalls to our memory the huge corpus of documents on Roman history published under the guidance of Mommsen, and it stands as an enduring monument to the devoted labour and wide accurate learning of this son of Maharashtra' (J. N. Sirkar).

The recovery of Mahadji Sindhia's Records is another piece of research carried out by Sardesai in 1937.

But the completion of these series of Marathi Records in 1934 meant for Sardesai not repose but the shouldering of a new task, the editing jointly with J. N. Sirkar, of the *English Records of the Old Poona Residency*. These English Records begin where the Peshwa Daftars end in 1776. The Poona Residency Records

contain a rich and varied mass of historical and economic information. These fourteen volumes of Residency Records bring the thread of Maratha History down to 1818 A.D. In the words of Sirkar :

'Eternal vigilance in self-criticism has been the saving salt of his (Sardesai's) writings. Tireless striving after accuracy, passion for going down to the root of things, cool balance of judgement and unfailing common sense in interpretation have marked his historical works.'

18. *Vincent Smith*

Dr. V. A. Smith was one of the last of the eminent band of orientalists, scholars and researchers, who, from the time of Sir William Jones and Charles Wilkins have done so much for the advancement of Indology.

'His knowledge of Indian History and art and all their connections was comprehensive and unrivalled ; his experience in India enabled him to use his materials with judicious discrimination and he co-ordinated and wrought them up into complete treatises that were acknowledged as authoritative. He accomplished a great work that lay beyond the scope of the researches of other individual scholars and conferred notable boons of permanent value not only on them, but also on all persons interested in India' (*Eminent Orientalists*).

This verdict on the output of Dr. Smith's scholarship, genius for collation and laborious industry, is an eminently just and impartial one. For nearly half a century, since his entry into the Indian Civil Service in 1871, did he patiently study the history, archaeology and arts of the people of the country which he served for about three decades. His contributions to oriental scholarship were immense and valuable ; he was an erudite and thorough student of the materials that he collected ; and the strength of his conclusions impressed his readers no less than the stores of buried learning which he brought to light.

He was born in Dublin on June 3, 1848, the son of Aquilla Smith, a well-known numismatist and archaeologist. He took his I.C.S. in 1869 and served through the regular magisterial and executive offices till about 1900. Dr. Smith's literary activities covered a period of nearly forty-five years. To the Indian Antiquary alone he was a valued contributor of more than forty years standing. The Coins of the Gupta Dynasty, the History and

Coinage of the Chandel dynasty, the Palas of Bengal, these were among the important subjects on which he wrote to the Antiquary. The Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society was vastly enriched by his contributions on the coins of the Gupta Dynasty and on the probable estimate of Graeco-Roman influence on the civilisation of Ancient India. The Journal of the German Oriental Society and the Ostasiatisch Zeitschrift contain a number of articles from his pen on the Andhras and their coinage, the Indo-Parthian dynasties, and Sakas of North India and other subjects. He was a frequent contributor to the journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.

Dr. Smith in 1901 published his book *Asoka, the Buddhist Emperor of India*, a popular yet scholarly account, of which he was engaged on the third edition when he died. He relied mainly on Buhler's translations of Asoka's inscriptions, but checked them by comparison with the versions of other scholars. He was the first writer to arrive at a true estimate of the historical value of the legends enveloping Asoka and keep them separate from authentic history. The second edition of *Asoka* came out in 1909.

He completed in 1904 *Early History of India*, which fashioned all the evidence scattered in many publications, his own and those of others, into a reasonable account of the period from 600 B.C. to the Muhammadan conquest. This work the learned author humbly regarded but as 'the taking stock of the accumulated stores of knowledge.' He designedly confined himself to the plain narration of political events. It was designed to be primarily a political history and a presentation of dynastic facts and not 'an encyclopaedia of Indian antiquities as some critics seem to think that it ought to be.'

A second and an improved edition appeared in 1908. The third edition was brought out in 1914 and a fourth revised by S. M. Edwardes, appeared in 1924.

In 1906, Dr. Smith issued the first volume of the *Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum*, Calcutta. Dr. Smith has given us within the covers of a single volume a succinct account of all the ancient and medieval non-mussalman coinage of India which would serve as a hand-book to the student by enabling him to easily find out the class to which belongs any specimen that he might have. He also wrote the *Oxford Student's History of India*, a short work that has gone through seven editions. His *History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon*, published in 1911, was acknowledged

to be the first comprehensive and masterly survey of fine art in all its branches from its beginnings to the present time. A second edition of the book has been revised by Prof. Codrington.

In 1917 was published his *Akbar, The Great Moghul*, 1542-1605. It is an admirable account of that great Mughul emperor. The commentaries of Monserrate, du Jarric, Peruschi and various other Jesuit missionaries who were invited to the Mughul Court, as well as the writings of early European travellers have been made full use of by Dr. Smith. One outstanding feature of Dr. Smith's book is that it brings out prominently the greatness and the genius of Tulasi Das—' the tallest tree in the magic garden of medieval Hindu Poesy.'

Dr. Smith's *Oxford History of India*, published in 1919, was his last great work. Its purpose is to provide a compendious up-to-date history of India as a whole, based on the results of modern research and marked by ' scrupulous accuracy of statement and impartiality of judgement.'[1]

He edited *Bernier's Travels* and *Sleeman's Rambles and Recollections*, contributed to the *Oxford Survey of the British Empire* and wrote *Indian Constitutional Reform viewed in the light of History* in 1919.

19. *Sylvain Levi*

The name of the French Savant Sylvain Levi is significant in Indian history. He was born in 1863 and took his degree in 1883 when he was just 20 years old. Sylvain Levi's contact with. Bergaigne, one of the greatest teachers of Sanskrit that Europe produced, is worthy to remember. Levi was a sound student of the classical languages and took to Sanskrit studies with great zeal.

Levi's first published work was a paper on the *Brihtkathamanjari* of Kshemendra in the Journal Asiatique for 1885-86. He was then appointed ' Master of Conference of the School of Higher studies ' in Paris. It was in these conferences of his early years that he came into contact with the most brilliant among his pupils, A. Meillet, the eminent philologist, and A. Foucher, the illustrious scholar of Buddhist Art and Archaeology. Later he was nominated to the Council of the French Asiatic Society. Levi's first contribution after this, was ' Bergaigne and Indianism ' in the Journal Asiatique for 1890. The same year he submitted two theses for his doctorate, one in Latin on ' What about Greece ?

Ancient Indian monuments conserved' and the other in French on 'The Theatre of the Hindus' which stands still an authority on the subject of Hindu drama. In 1894 he was appointed to the chair of Sanskrit in the College of France. At the age of 31 he reached the highest educational position and began his life's work as the colleague of such eminent savants as Darmesteter, Maspero, and Gaston Paris. He delivered lectures on various subjects relating to his chair, discussing Asoka inscriptions and organised classes for teaching Chinese and Tibetan, along with Pali and Sanskrit. Levi visited India, Nepal, Indo-China and Japan in 1897-98. After finishing the tour he took much more interest in Indian studies and published his monograph on the 'Doctrine of Sacrifice in the Brahmanas' in 1898.

Levi's association with Chinese scholars during his tour gave new life to the parallel study of Chinese and Indian culture.

Levi's interest in institutions of public benefit was great.— It is in connection with one of these that he visited India early in 1922 at the invitation of Tagore issued from the Santiniketan Viswabharati. His views in regard to the position of India in the history of civilization bring them near enough in idea to Viswabharati, as he said in concluding his article on '*Bergaigne and Indianism*,' 'From Persia to the Chinese Sea, from the icy regions of Siberia to the islands of Java and Borneo, from Oceanea to Socotra, India has propagated her beliefs, her genius, her tales, and her civilization.' He gives his view on Indian history: 'The multiplicity of the manifestations of the Indian genius as well as their fundamental unity gives India the right to figure on the first rank in the history of civilized nations.'

20. *Horace Hayman Wilson* 1786-1860.

Born September 26, 1786, and educated at St. Thomas Hospital, he arrived in Calcutta in 1808, in the medical service of East India Company. He was at once attached to the Mint at Calcutta for his knowledge of Chemistry and assay. He was Secretary to the Asiatic Society of Bengal. He lived and worked in Calcutta till the close of the year 1832. He became Boden Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford in 1833, Librarian of the India House in 1836, and died in 1860.

The versatility of Wilson's powers was best known by the wide range of his acquirements in Indian languages. He knew Sanskrit, Bengali, Persian, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil and Marathi.

As for his knowledge of Sanskrit, it was of a very high order. His literary works are so many that a bare list of them would fill several pages of an ordinary book. He translated the *Meghaduta* of Kalidasa in 1813. He published the *Theatre of the Hindus* and *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, besides contributing to Asiatic Researches, the Journals of the Asiatic, Medical and Physical Societies and other oriental literature. He wrote an *Historical Account of the Burmese War*, and catalogued Col. Colin Mackenzie's manuscripts. Another useful work of Wilson is his well known treatise on the *Religious Sects of the Hindus*. It is a valuable contribution to the history of Hindu religion and theology. He has given us a summary of the Puranas and of the *Kathasaritsagara*. Wilson's translation of the *Rig Veda* is another work for which he is deservedly famous. It is a very creditable performance and appears to have done yeoman's service to those subsequent Sanskritists who made their attempts in the same direction. He brought out a new edition of *Mill's History of British India*. He prepared a *Glossary of Indian Revenue Terms*. He was the greatest Sanskrit scholar of his time, combining a variety of attainments as general linguist, historian, chemist, accountant, numismatist and musician. Wilson was a wonderful man, and there have been few, indeed, who would bear to be compared with him in the domain of oriental learning.

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